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ABSTRACT

This is a qualitative study of four women receiving assistance through the Trade Readjustment Act (TRA) and who were enrolled in a developmental writing course. The TRA provides money to displaced workers for the purposes of retraining them to reenter the workforce. The four women in the study were nontraditional students and displaced garment workers from the Appalachian region. The purpose of the study was to see if the women's writing improved over the course of the semester, based on employers' expectations and rubrics specially designed for identifying elements of good writing. Upon close analysis of the women's writing, improvements in the writing based on participation in the developmental writing class were identified. Additionally, based on interviews, participant observation, and analysis of the writing samples, it was determined that the women's confidence in themselves as writers also increased as a result of the participation in the writing class. Implications of this study address the appropriate role of developmental writing programs in higher education. Appended are developmental test scores, teacher and student consent forms, employers' expectations, writing course plan, scoring rubrics, exit interview questions, and participant essays. (Contains 101 references.) (RC)

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TRADE READJUSTMENT ACT WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENTAL WRITING: PREPARING FOR EDUCATION AND RETRAINING

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Katherine Lelia Hall

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of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

Curriculum and Instruction

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TRADE READJUSTMENT ACT WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENTAL WRITING: PREPARING FOR EDUCATION AND RETRAINING

by

Katherine Lelia Hall

Committee Chairperson: Patricia P. Kelly, Curriculum and Instruction

(ABSTRACT)

Due to the large number of garment factory closings in the Appalachian region of Virginia, many workers have become unemployed. Mittelhauser (1997) reported, "textile and apparel workers are expected to lose jobs at an even faster rate. Employment in these industries has been projected to decline by about 300,000 jobs over the 1994-2005 period, compared to a net loss of about 250,000 jobs over the previous 11-year period" (p. 28).

In order to provide governmental assistance for these workers, the Trade Readjustment Act (TRA) gives money to these displaced workers so they can be retrained. TRA includes training, trade readjustment allowance, relocation allowance, subsistence allowance (while in training), transportation allowance, and reemployment services (ETA, 2000). The majority of retraining occurs at regional community colleges. Further, most of the displaced garment workers are women since the majority of the jobs involved sewing. In fact, Mittelhauser (1997) found that "nearly three-quarters of the employees working in the apparel industry in 1996 were women, compared to about a third of the workers in the entire manufacturing sector" (p. 25).

When the displaced workers apply for community college classes, most of them test into developmental classes, including developmental writing. According to Doyle and Fueger (1995), developmental writing meets "the need to write effectively and coherently and the need to use standard grammar, usage, and punctuation" (p. 22). Further, Sweigart (1996) identified the most

important purpose and outcome of developmental writing as "the development of the writing abilities of individual students" (p. 13).

This descriptive study followed four women in Developmental Writing 03 class at Creekview Community College. The four TRA women in the study were nontraditional students, as well as displaced garment workers from the Appalachian region.

The purpose of the study was to see if the women's writing improved over the course of the semester, based on employers' expectations and rubrics specially designed for looking at the traits of good writing. Specifically, the study looked at the women's in-class and out-of-class writing. The writing was analyzed in depth by the researcher and was presented in case studies, one for each woman in the study. Because of employers' concerns about workers' poor writing skills, the writing was further analyzed in terms of workplace expectations so as to determine if the women acquired writing skills that would assist them in their future workplaces. Ascher (1988) said that writing skills in the workplace meant "writing legibly and completing forms accurately; writing Standard English; selecting, organizing, and relating ideas; and proofreading one's own writing" (p. 1).

Upon close analysis of the women's writing, it was decided that their writing did show at least some improvement based on the participation in a developmental writing class. Additionally, based on interviews, participant observation of the women in Developmental Writing 03, and the analysis of the women's writing, it was determined that the women's confidence in themselves as writers also increased as a result of their participation in the semester long developmental writing class.

DEDICATION

To Sara Lee Jacobs—My Mom

For her strength, her courage and most of all her belief in me, I dedicate this dissertation to my mother. She has always supported me in my life's goals, even when she did not always agree that they were the best for me. We know that all of us get a mother in life, but some of us are very lucky and get a friend. I am one of the lucky ones.

This is for you, Mama, for all you have done and will continue to do to help make a girl with a dream a woman who found it.

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I also would like to acknowledge some of the other members of my committee. Kurt, again, I cannot possibly thank you for all you have done for me. You have supported my sometimes-scary move into the corporate world, have taught me what it takes to be a good trainer, and have always believed in my ideas and me. I will always be grateful. Kathleen, you have shown me how to be an effective member of the school systems, supported my decisions, and shown me that teaching can be wonderful and magical, even after all of these years in the classroom. And David, you have shown all graduate students in my class that we can make it and still live. Thanks for being you.

Acknowledgement comes too as overwhelming gratitude to my participants, Dr. Martin, Angie, Lauren, Elsie, and Danene, even though I cannot here say your real names, the real "yous" are always in my heart. Without you and your continued support, this study would have never been done and for this I will always be thankful to each of you. I hope I made some small difference in your lives because you sure did in mine. Dr. Martin, thanks for showing me what it is like to be an excellent teacher.

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Chapter One

Introduction to Study

"If you can take a bunch of women who used to sew shirts and write a book about them, you can do anything." --Angie, TRA student

As a newcomer to Appalachia Virginia, I began to notice the daily headlines that reported factory after factory permanently closing its doors. As a researcher does, I began to read about these factories' closings and to investigate further who was affected by the shutdowns. I soon discovered that the majority of factory closings in Appalachia were garment factories. Because most of the jobs in garment factories involve sewing, the majority of the workers in the factories are women. When the factories close down for good, these women are left with the options of either looking immediately for a new job, which is difficult since most of the women have little to no skills outside of sewing, or to go to their regional community college and be retrained into a new profession.

The government, anticipating an abundance of displaced workers from all types of factories, initiated the Trade Act of 1974. Later, when former President Clinton signed the North American Free Trade Agreement during the 1990's, he expanded the Trade Act to be called the Trade Readjustment Act (TRA), which included more benefits for displaced workers. These benefits include unemployment pay, travel reimbursement, and free education, including books and supplies, at a community college.

When the displaced workers go to the community college for retraining, many of them test into developmental, noncredit courses, including developmental writing. In developmental writing, students learn the fundamentals of good writing, including using Standard English and writing clear, concise essays. Furthermore, in developmental writing classes, consistent with the mission of the community college to prepare students with vocational skills, students are taught

to become better writers with the intention that these skills will eventually transfer to workplace writing.

Description of Study

The purpose of this descriptive study was to analyze TRA women's writing and their attitudes as writers while they participated in a developmental writing class. The Developmental Writing 03 class is the beginning class for the TRA women in this study to retrain for another profession. This study also sought to discover if participating in the class improved the women's writing skills based on employers' expectations.

This study followed four TRA women as they participated in a semester long Developmental Writing 03 class at Creekview Community College (a pseudonym) in Appalachian Virginia. Elsie, Lauren, Angie and Danene (also pseudonyms) were displaced garment workers who were using their TRA funds for retraining at the community college. During the Fall 2000 semester, they were enrolled in Dr. Martin's (another pseudonym) Developmental Writing 03 class.

Developmental Writing 03, a non-credit course, is the second level of developmental writing at Creekview. It is preceded only by Developmental Writing 01 (there is no 02 course in the sequence). Once students successfully complete Developmental Writing 03, they may enroll in English classes for credit such as English 111 (Freshman Composition) or English 115 (Business Writing), depending on their plan of study.

For the Fall 2000 semester, I was a participant observer in Dr. Martin's class. The women shared with me their in-class writing, their out-of-class revised writing, and their final exam essays for this study. Additionally, I collected fieldnotes on the days I was in class, and I conducted post-paper and exit interviews with the women throughout the semester. I came to

know the four TRA students as writers throughout the course of the semester. Their writing and their attitudes about writing are what made up the case studies for this study.

Questions Guiding Research

There were two research questions that guided this descriptive study:

- In what ways do the writing skills of Trade Readjustment Act (TRA) students change during a developmental writing class?
- In what ways do TRA students talk about themselves as writers while participating in a developmental writing class?

Significance of Study

This study is significant because it closely examined writing as it relates to both learning to write in the academy and, more importantly for this study, in the workplace. The literature on employers' expectations for writers in the workplace consistently has described employees' lack of writing skills (CVCC, 1999; Hays, 1999; McGarvey, 1999; Sunoo, 1999). This study sought to describe how students improve upon their writing skills after participating in a developmental writing class. Learning to write better and building confidence in viewing themselves as writers should impact the participants of the study once they return to the workforce.

Additionally, this study is important because it investigated women being retrained to reenter the workforce. Because of the students' objectives for being retrained, this research was important for socioeconomic reasons. The TRA students at the community college impact their community economically in both the loss of their jobs and the potential contributions that they will make in their future careers.

Assumptions

Because of my experiences as a writing teacher, two degrees in English, and work as a professional editor, I assumed that I have the qualifications to closely analyze the women's writing. Although the rating and scoring methods provided feedback about the women's writing, my professional analysis was necessary to further describe their writing improvement and the areas in which they had strengths and weaknesses.

Furthermore, because of the subjective nature of evaluating writing, I assumed that the quality of a piece of writing can only be assessed by an expert. Additionally, essays are too subjective to analyze based only on numerical value. Even if I counted the number of commas and the number of instances of other errors, a close analysis of the writing provided a better description of the writing's features. Another assumption is that evaluating writing is a holistic and impressionistic task. In other words, a piece of writing communicates its message as a "whole" rather than in parts. Although an analysis of the features of the writing yields available information, the overall quality of a piece of writing is best assessed by a holistic, impressionistic measure.

Limitations of Study

First of all, the limitations of this study involved the number of subjects and the length of the study. Looking at four participants' writing was sufficient for describing writing in case studies. Since it is difficult to determine significant change in writing skills over the course of a semester, this study was limited in that it only occurred over the Fall 2000 semester.

This study was also limited to the end products of writing assignments for analysis. Using only the end products for analysis was sufficient for this study because the expectations of

business writing focus on the end products and not the other drafts the writer does for an assignment.

Another limitation is that I chose not to tape-record the interviews with the TRA women. Because of power issues and because I felt different than the women in the study, I wanted to make them as comfortable as possible when I talked to them about writing. Inevitably, I knew that my presence in the classroom would change the environment, so in all of my contact with the women, I tried to be as non-intrusive as possible.

Definition of Terms Used in Study

Since this is a study about writing, the language reflects the current discussion in the teaching and research of writing. In order to clarify the writing specific terms that are referred to throughout the study, the terms are defined:

- Comparison/Contrast writing: "When we *compare* two things, we show how they are similar; when we *contrast* two things, we show how they are different…The purpose of comparing or contrasting is to understand each of the two things more clearly and, at times, to make judgments about them" (Langan, 2001, p. 265).
- Composing Domain: When a writer has control over the features in the Composing Domain, "the writer demonstrates consistent, though not necessarily perfect, control of the composing domain's features. The piece is generally unified in that all of the parts contribute to the creation of a dominant impression or idea. The sharply focused central idea is fully, but not exhaustively, elaborated with key examples, illustrations, reasons, events, or details. In all successful responses, layers of elaboration are present. Surface signals, like transitions, logically connect their respective statements into the whole of the

paper. In all types of writing, a strong organizational plan is apparent. Any minor organizational lapses that occur do not significantly detract from the presentation. The writing provides evidence of unity by exhibiting a consistent point of view (e.g. not switching from "I" to "you"), a lack of digressions, appropriate transitions both within the paragraphs and across the entire piece, the presence of careful logic, and a strong lead and closure" (VA Dept. of Educ.).

- Descriptive writing: "When you describe someone or something, you give your readers a picture in words. To make a word picture as vivid and real as possible, you must observe and record specific details that appeal to your readers' senses. More than any type of essay, a descriptive paper needs sharp, colorful details" (Langan, 2001, p. 175).
- Example writing (writing by example): "In essays, too, explanatory examples help your audience fully understand your point. Lively specific examples also add interest to your paper" (Langan, 2001, p. 211).
- Narrative writing: "Storytelling, whether we are relating a single story or several related ones. Through narration, we make a statement clear by relating in detail something that has happened to us. In the story we tell, we present the details in the order in which they happened" (Langan, 2001, p. 195).
- Rhetorical mode: rhetorical="The body of principles and theory having to do with the presentation of facts and ideas in clear, convincing, and attractive language" (Holman, 1972, p. 451); mode="the manner or way in which a thing is done; method" (Barnhart & Barnhart, 1991, p. 1335).
- Standard English: "Business English is really *standard English*. A dictionary definition that has no usage label (*Obs., Collq.*, etc.) is considered to be standard" (Barry & Ellison, 1997, p.6).

- Usage/Mechanics Domain: When a writer has successful control of the Usage/Mechanics Domain, "the writer demonstrates consistent, though not necessarily perfect, control of the domain's features of usage/mechanics. The writing demonstrates a thorough understanding of usage and mechanics as specified in the Virginia K-11 SOL. The author uses capitalization, punctuation, usage, and sentence formation and applies the structural principles of spelling. A few errors in usage and mechanics may be present. However, the writer's control of the domain's many features is too strong for these mistakes to detract from the performance" (VA Dept. of Educ.).
- Writing process: According to Langan (2000):

  For many people, writing is a process that involves the following steps:

  1. Discovering a thesis—often through prewriting.
  2. Developing solid support for the thesis—often through more prewriting.
  3. Organizing the thesis and supporting material and writing it out in a first draft.
  4. Revising and then editing carefully to ensure an effective, error-free paper. (p. 23)
- Written Expression Domain: When a writer has control over the Written Expression Domain, "the writer demonstrates consistent, though not perfect, control of the written expression domain's features. The result is a purposefully crafted message that the reader remembers, primarily because its precise information and vocabulary resonate as images in the reader's mind. Highly specific word choice and information also create a purposeful tone in the writing and enhance the writer's voice. If metaphors, similes, personification, or other examples of figurative language are present, they are appropriate to the purpose of the piece. The writer repeats or varies sentence construction for effect and appropriately subordinates ideas and embeds modifiers on a regular basis, resulting in rhythmic flow throughout the piece" (VA Dept. of Educ.).

Conclusion

This study examined the writing of four TRA students enrolled in Dr. Martin's Developmental Writing 03 during the Fall 2000 semester. Four case studies describing the women's writing and how they talk about themselves as writers comprise the data analysis of this study. Furthermore, this study looked at how the writing skills that the women acquired should assist them in their writing at their future jobs.

In the following chapter, there is a presentation of the literature relevant for this study. The next chapter presents the methods used for conducting this study. The fourth chapter presents the data analysis in a case study format. Finally, the last chapter presents a discussion of the findings of this study.

Chapter Two

Relevant Literature

Based on the purpose and focus of my study, there are some specific areas of the literature that are addressed in this review of the relevant literature. Since the focus of this study is on the women's writing, the review first covers developmental writing, including its purpose, its students, and the role of the community college in developmental writing. Next this review contains a historical context that looks at issues relevant to the study. This historical context section includes dislocated workers, features of dislocated workers in the region, nontraditional students, Creekview Community College's role in retraining, and the community college and TRA retraining. Finally, there is a section on employer's expectations for writing and the importance of workplace writing, which includes a section on employer and employee research. All of these sections combined provide a framework, based on the research, of the issues that were addressed in this study.

Developmental Writing

Developmental writing, also referred to in the literature as basic writing or remedial writing, provides students with a place to improve their writing skills. The skills addressed in a developmental writing class usually cover the fundamentals of grammar and mechanics, the process of composing writing for a variety of audiences and purposes, and the editing skills to improve students' own writing and the writing of others.

Historically, developmental writing classes began surfacing in the academy as a result of increasing enrollment in colleges during the early 1970's. Due to protests and the expanding diversity of university students, colleges began to admit more students who were underprepared

for writing discourse. Writing samples collected for college entrance exams showed greater numbers of students who did not know how to write for college classes. Early remedial and basic writing courses sought to prepare students for writing in the academy (Shaughnessy, 1977).

With minimal research and few available curriculum designs for implementing developmental writing programs, early researcher-educators like Mina P. Shaughnessy sought to provide other developmental writing teachers with research and models to help them successfully teach their students writing. More research devoted to developmental writing began to emerge as the number of developmental writing classes increased in both four- and two-year colleges.

Developmental writing can address several writing needs for students. Amey and Long (1998) pointed out that "The knowledge gained in developmental courses in English, reading, and mathematics seems fundamental to the successful completion of other college courses" (p. 8). However, developmental writing courses help not only to improve the academic writing students will encounter in college, but also writing necessary for the workplace and in their daily lives. Doyle and Fueger's (1995) description of developmental writing encompassed this belief as they described the purpose of developmental writing as "the need to write effectively and coherently and the need to use standard grammar, usage, and punctuation" (p. 22). These skills reflect good writing in a variety of personal and professional situations.

Further, in Doyle's and Fueger's (1995) study, which assessed students' writing progress in developmental writing, they found that students' writing abilities increased as a result of taking the course. They examined samples of developmental students' writing at the beginning of the course (diagnostic essay) and also at the end of the course (exit essay) to assess students' improvement. They found that after completing a developmental writing course, "the students wrote longer, more complex sentences and at the same time reduced the number of errors in those sentences. Not only are the results favorable, but also the percentage of change between

pre- and postcourse papers is relatively consistent" (p. 24). In their study, it is important to note that participation in a developmental writing class provided positive gains in writing.

Purpose of Developmental Writing

Developmental writing courses seek to improve students' writing skills. Students who test into or choose to take developmental writing courses are underprepared for the writing challenges they will face in the academy. Without successful completion of a developmental writing course, these ill-prepared students often fail writing tasks encountered in other college classes. Sweigart (1996) identified the most important purpose and outcome of developmental writing as "the development of the writing abilities of individual students" (p. 13). The American Association of Community Colleges (1999), in their report about the needs for developmental education, defined the purpose of developmental education as:

> To provide all students with the skills necessary to succeed, regardless of their diverse needs, backgrounds, experiences and goals. Developmental education incorporates oral communication, information literacy, computer technology, workplace readiness, and learning to learn as well as the traditional basic academic skills of mathematics, reading and writing. (p. 6)

Holistically, developmental writing "serves a critical bridge to a productive workforce, to an enhanced quality of life, and to access a higher education for many individuals" (American Association of Community Colleges, 1999, p. 5). In other words, developmental writing serves the students beyond the academic writing they will encounter in college.

Developmental writing teachers are assigned the role of moving their students beyond their fundamental difficulties with writing. Witkowski (1998) defined the beliefs of

developmental writing teachers and how those beliefs transfer to their students: "We believe that writing is a learned ability. The best way, and maybe the only way, to learn how to write is by writing" (p. 54). Thus developmental students are provided ample opportunities to write and, by doing so, should learn to write better. Witkowski further asserted, as far as developmental writing students, "As [they learn] to write, [they are] also finding out about the characteristics of good writing" (p. 55).

Additionally, teachers of developmental writing courses "encourage students to use their own knowledges and languages to lead them, by a process, to school literacy" (McKoski, 1995, p. 9). The writing assignments in developmental writing courses often include narratives and descriptive essays where students are able to write in first person and share their own experiences. Typically in the developmental writing course plan, these personal essays come early in the semester and provide the students the opportunity to write in a more comfortable personal stance.

Because writing about oneself or personal experiences is more comfortable, students are more open to participating in the writing process. Knodt (1991) also asserted that narratives and personal writing build the self-confidence of developmental writers: "These activities may give them the skills they need and the confidence to say 'I can do that!' when faced with a new writing situation and in their next writing course or in another subject" (p. 30). Further, McKoski (1995), in his attempt to explain the purpose of developmental writing assignments, such as the narrative, determined that "the principal pedagogical motive for expressive and process models of writing…are necessary tools for engaging the inexperienced and marginalized students in the act of writing" (p. 9).

Developmental Writing Students

Many students entering the community college are required to enroll in developmental classes. The American Association of Community Colleges (1999) revealed that, "three out of every four students entering community college require developmental education in at least one area" (p. 5). Most community colleges use standardized placement tests to determine who is required to take developmental classes. The most common test used for placement is the ASSET Placement Test. Hodges (1998) described the ASSET Test and its use:

> The ASSET is a student success system for two-year institutions designed to be a student advising, placement, and retention system. It includes 25-minute placement tests in writing, reading, numerical skills, elementary algebra, intermediate algebra, college algebra, and geometry. Today it is used widely by technical and community colleges for course placement. (pp. 57-58)

Amey and Long (1998), in their study on early placement in developmental courses, determined there were "high correlations between mandatory placement in reading and English [writing] and overall student success, based on ASSET scores" (p. 7).

Just as there are differences between developmental writing courses and other college level composition courses, there are some differences between developmental students and other students. Sweigart (1996) found in his study of assessing developmental writing students that "Students assigned to developmental writing courses are of several kinds, both young and older, and often with very varying motivational levels" (p. 6).

Shaughnessy (1977) provided multiple descriptions of developmental writing students. In her guide for teachers of basic writing, she pinpointed the two types of students that are often enrolled in a developmental class as:

> Those who had survived their secondary schooling but not thrived on it, whose reading was seldom voluntary and whose writing reflected a flat competence, by no means error-free but limited more seriously by its utter predictability—its bare vocabulary, safe syntax, and platitudinous tone, the writing of students who had learned to get by but who seemed to have found no fun nor challenge in academic tasks. [Also it includes] those who had been left so far behind the others in their formal education that they appeared to have little or no chance of catching up, students whose difficulties with the written language seemed of a different order from those of other groups, as if they had come, you might say, from a different country, or at least through different schools, where even very modest standards of high-school literacy had not been met. (p. 2)

Students who are in developmental writing courses often have had poor experiences with their high school English classes, and when they wrote, took little interest in the process of writing. When they did write, it often was just to minimally meet the requirements of a course. Also because of disinterest, poor attendance, or other nonacademic behavior during school, many developmental writers also have poor academic skills. TRA students, including the ones in this study, tend to have characteristics from these categories of writers.

Shaugnessy (1977) also described the developmental (basic) writers as those "students [that] write the way they do, not because they are slow or non-verbal, indifferent to or incapable of academic excellence, but because they are beginners and must, like all beginners, learn by making mistakes" (p. 5). This theoretical basis for understanding developmental students is crucial to understanding how they come to the developmental class as non-writers.

Further, Lunsford (1997) stated of developmental writers "that most of our basic writing students are operating well below the formal-operations or true-concept formation stage of

cognitive development, and hence they have great difficulty in 'de-centering' and performing tasks which require analysis and synthesis" (p. 280). In other words, developmental writers have difficulty visualizing writing tasks and the combination of tasks that it takes to write successfully.

Concerning the mindset of developmental writers, Shaugnessy added further, "the BW [basic writer] student both resents and resists his vulnerability as a writer. He is aware that he leaves a trail of errors behind him when he writes. He can usually think of little else while he is writing. But he doesn't know what to do about it" (p. 7). Given these characteristics, it was important for me to understand how students perceived writing when I entered the Developmental Writing 03 class at Creekview Community College.

It was also important to recognize that most of the students in the developmental writing classes knew they needed to improve their writing. Wenner and Palkovacs (1997), in their study of developmental writers' perceptions of the academy, found that developmental writing students "were more likely to think they needed the course, seldom referring to any preparation for college in their high school programs, possibly because many had not attended high school recently" (p. 19).

Along with recognizing the need for a developmental writing course, many students recognized that their intimidation in terms of writing came from previous experiences, which affected their self-esteem and confidence as writers. Creel, Kuhne and Riggle (2000) described that early on in their developmental writing courses, "the students raised a series of writing problems such as lack of confidence, organizational skills, and self-esteem" (p. 143). Similarly, Witkowski (1998) recognized the importance of increasing self-esteem in developmental writing students and she believed this could be done through activities associated with writing:

> While feedback from instructor and peers helps her to see writing from another person's perspective, the ability to self assess accurately and at various times during her writing process is essential if the student is to continue to develop those processes. This allows her to grow in self confidence and authority over the text she has produced and to use her writing abilities in the personal and professional settings after graduation. (p. 55)

Also Holmsten (1999) found, in her qualitative study of developmental writers in her community college basic writing class, that the students almost always had a problem with fluency and self-confidence. Students are able to develop self-confidence in a developmental writing class by receiving validation. Rendon (2000), in her study of collaborative efforts in community colleges, found:

> what had transformed nontraditional students into powerful learners and persisters were incidents in which other people, in or out of class, had 'validated' them. Validation occurs when faculty and staff let students know they are capable learners, are valued by the institution, and play an important role in their own learning (p. 8).

Developmental writing students also have expectations for their developmental writing courses. As shown in a study of developmental writing college students, high school students, and their teachers conducted by Burkhalter (2000), "students need to write frequently and to have that writing evaluated in terms of specific mechanical and stylistic errors related to the standard English rules which they study" (p. 114).

Along with improving confidence, another necessary component of developmental writing courses is that students reshape their ideas about writing. Developmental writing students are described by Haynes-Burton (1995) as those who "may be reluctant to ask for help

with their writing, and, when they do, they may tend to focus on basic problems with grammar and mechanics rather than an overall structure or support for their ideas" (p. 103). Whether students are intimidated by writing or because they have never been encouraged to write, developmental writing courses seek to help students gain the skills necessary to become better writers.

Moreover, at the end of developmental writing courses, students often positively acknowledge that the course has taught them how to improve their writing. Sheridan-Rabideau and Brossell (1995) found, "basic writers often express their appreciation for having the chance to accomplish in basic writing classes what they could not in regular classes: improve their writing skills and develop a sense of comfort and confidence as writers" (p. 25). Improved writing skills and increased levels of confidence often help students to continue writing successfully.

At the end of the developmental writing class, Shaugnessy (1977) described what teachers and employers can expect after a semester of developmental writing: expect "a clear indication of control over errors in punctuation and grammar, provided this is a feature of instruction either in the class or conferences. Errors will remain, but for most students the errors should begin to appear residual rather than dominant" (p. 276). Thus at the end of a successful developmental writing course, students should be better prepared to write in the academy and develop skills that will be conducive to their future workplace writing.

Community College and Developmental Writing

In some states, college developmental writing courses are found at both the four-year and the two-year college. In this study, and notably in the Commonwealth of Virginia,

developmental writing is offered only at two-year community colleges. The four women in this study were all required to take Developmental Writing 03 as a noncredit part of their community college programs.

In Patthey-Chavez, Speigel, and Dillon's (1998) study on community college students who enrolled in developmental (basic) writing classes, students were statistically tracked throughout their community college academic careers. These developmental students were compared to students who did not take developmental writing courses. Chavez et al. determined that students who completed developmental writing met with success and "an excellent chance of succeeding in college and AA degree levels of English" (p. 20). Additionally, they found that these students have an overall higher chance of achievement.

Similarly, in a study conducted by Amey and Long (1998), underprepared college students who enrolled in developmental writing fared better in their other academic courses. Based on students who had scored in the developmental range of the ASSET test scores, Amey and Long found that developmental writing is "fundamental to the successful completion of other college courses" (p. 8). They also found in their study that "the variable that contributed the most to the success of underprepared students in this study was the highest developmental English [writing] course completed" (p. 6).

Finally, in Glau's (1999) study on the long-term achievement of students who had taken developmental writing, he found a pattern of continued success for previous developmental writing students. He summarized the students in his study by describing how "we've taken students with the lowest test scores, twice as many who come from historically underrepresented groups, and made them the best ENG 102 [class that follows developmental writing] students" (p. 5).

Historical Context

In order to understand how developmental writers and developmental writing works into the framework of this study, there were some historical aspects that needed to be addressed. These historical elements provided further explanation of the study population and how they came to participate in a semester of developmental writing.

Dislocated Workers

When a factory closes down permanently or when it makes terminal layoffs, a worker becomes dislocated. Dislocated (or displaced) workers are growing in number in the United States for a variety of reasons. Hollenback, Pratzner, and Rosen (1984) described these workers and provided some reasons for their position as dislocated factory employees:

> Education and training policymakers are grappling with the residual underemployment problems faced by workers who have been displaced by the forces of technological change, import competition, shortened product cycles, changes in consumer preferences, or industrial regulation. Such workers—who have had a strong attachment to the labor force but who have been laid off or have been given notice of an impending layoff, *and* who have little likelihood of becoming reemployed in their former industry or occupation—are labeled displaced workers. (p. 3)

Dislocated workers from factories have been previously employed in many different types of industries. Some were in industrially oriented factories, such as machinery and fuel, while many of them were in goods manufacturing facilities, such as clothing and furniture. For

the purpose of this study, the focus was on a population of dislocated workers from the garment manufacturing industry.

In the Southeastern part of the United States, there is a concentration of both textile and garment manufacturing facilities. Textiles are the factories that make not only fabric for garments but also products like carpet and industrial types of fabrics. Mittelhauser (1997) defined the garment workers, also referred to as apparel workers, as those who "convert fabrics produced by the textile industry into clothing and other finished goods, eventually to be sold on the retail market...sewing machine operators, who perform the most labor-intensive step in apparel production, make up the most common occupation in the industry" (p. 25).

The percentage of dislocated workers in general, and in the garment industry in particular, is increasing and will continue to grow. Mittelhauser (1997) revealed, "textile and apparel workers are expected to lose jobs at an even faster rate. Employment in these industries has been projected to decline by about 300,000 jobs over the 1994-2005 period, compared to a net loss of about 250,000 jobs over the previous 11-year period" (p. 28). These layoffs especially affect the women, who work in the sewing end of the apparel making industry, negatively.

Many garment workers sew clothing. Now much of the clothing that is sold in the United States is made either in Mexico, South America, the Caribbean, or Asia. The jobs have moved to these locales since the profit margin for companies is larger when the employees are paid less. Mittelhauser (1997) confirmed, "The primary incentive for transferring certain phases of production to LDC's [less-developed countries] is the lower cost of labor in these countries" (p. 25). Mittelhauser cited too that "According to the U.S. International Trade Commission, roughly half of the total productive capacity in the apparel industry has shifted from developed countries to LDC's over the past three decades" (p. 25).

Mittelhauser also pointed out that most clothing bought in the United States is now made in other countries and that "While these imports have helped to keep prices low for most consumers, they also have contributed to employment declines in the U.S. apparel industry" (p. 27). Garment factories moving to other countries have left the workforce, who are predominantly women, without jobs and without the skills to do any other job outside of sewing in the factory.

Economists predicted the current loss of many jobs in the manufacturing industry. Kellam (1994) pointed out:

> There is a broad consensus that U.S. corporations, from the 1950's through the 70's, took advantage of a prosperous economy and legions of relatively unskilled workers with little consideration for the inevitable changes lurking on the industrial frontier. The downsizing and restructuring of businesses during the past decade are viewed as a natural, and necessary, response to industry's shortsightedness. What now alarms labor experts is how poorly equipped many of the displaced workers are to assume new jobs with higher skill requirements. (p. 54)

Once workers become dislocated, there are retraining and educational options available for them. The federal government currently offers services to laid off workers under the Trade Readjustment Act (TRA), originally under the Trade Act of 1974, which include training, trade readjustment allowance, relocation allowance, subsistence allowance (while in training), transportation allowance (while in training), and reemployment services (ETA, 2000).

The population of dislocated workers continues to grow in the United States. Hollenback et al. (1984), even before current layoffs due to manufacturers closing and moving factories, predicted that, "Although estimates of the size of the displaced worker population vary considerably, forum participants agree that displacement is an employability problem of national

concern. It is a problem without easy or immediate solutions, and one that is likely to plague us for years to come" (p. 16).

The women in this study were both dislocated workers and students studying under TRA monies. These women made up a unique population in that they were TRA recipients. According to Decker and Corson (1999):

> TRA recipients differ from other populations in a number of ways. First, because the TAA [Trade Adjustment Assistance] program is targeted explicitly on workers who have been harmed by import competition, it primarily serves workers from the manufacturing sector, with major concentrations in the textile and apparel...industries...In contrast, most workers in the general population of displaced workers identified by the Bureau of Labor Statistics have not previously been employed in manufacturing. (p. 761)

Furthermore, the TRA recipients in this study were distinct from other women who were garment workers in other geographical regions because they are Appalachian. Having an Appalachian cultural background represents another aspect of their uniqueness as a study sample group.

Features of Dislocated Workers in the Region

Most workers in the apparel/garment making industry are losing their jobs due to factory closure. The literature refers to the region represented in my study as the "Southeastern region" of the United States where the earnings of workers have traditionally been lower than those of other manufacturing workers (U.S. Department of Labor, 1999). The lower wages are due to the minimal skills required to do the job and also because most of the workers are women.

For the workers in this area of manufacturing, termed here as textile, but which in this report also includes the garment industry, the U.S. Department of Labor (1999) reported:

> Although the Southeast continues to maintain a large share of textile employment, the relative importance of the textile industry to the Southeast's total manufacturing employment has declined. From 1979 through 1997, manufacturing employment in the Southeast increased by 2.8 percent while textile employment declined by 27.9. as a result, textile employment as a percent of overall manufacturing employment in the Southeast has dropped from 17 percent in 1979 to 12 percent in 1997. (p. 2)

Again, the majority of the workers in the garment industry are women. This factor was also true in this study of displaced garment workers in the Appalachian region, which further defined the Southeastern region for this particular study. Mittelhauser (1997) reported, "nearly three-quarters of the employees working in the apparel industry in 1996 were women, compared to about a third of the workers in the entire manufacturing sector" (p. 25). Hipple (1999) concluded, "the displacement rate for women (3.2 percent) actually exceeded that for men (2.8 percent) for the first time since the Displaced Worker Survey was conducted" (p. 16). The women in the garment factories in Appalachia primarily worked in the sewing section of the factories and as described by Mittelhauser, most of the job losses were for sewing machine operators.

The displaced garment worker women in this study were also unique since they were born and raised in Appalachia. Eldon Miller, a community college president in Appalachia says of his female students, "' they're married, raising kids, got families, husbands working. There's another place-boundness,' he continues, 'and it's a cultural place-boundness. They aren't going

to leave where they grew up and where their family is'" (Baldwin, 1996, p. 6). The women in this study fit Miller's description.

This "place-boundness" is why many of the displaced garment workers choose not to leave the Appalachian area. Even if they choose to utilize their TRA funding and find a new job, they often do not leave their home area. Karen Lawrey, a long time resident and teacher in Appalachia, said of the Appalachian women, "you have to look at the fact that these people don't want to relocate, a lot of them. The younger ones maybe, but a lot of them have worked all these years; they've got kids in school; they own a house. A lot of it is the Appalachian tie to this area...They live on the same land or near the same area where they've grown up" (Hall, 2000, pp. 18-19).

The cultural implications for Appalachian women further tie them to their home place. Although some have moved from their physical home neighborhood, they "maintain blue-collar lifestyles, including their extended family and a group of Appalachian friends as their primary social network" (Obermiller & Maloney, 1991, p. 321). The connections to their culture and their birthplace keep most Appalachian women within the boundaries of their home community. This tendency to stay in their community is important when considering that TRA students will be retrained, yet most will almost always seek employment in the same geographical area.

Appalachian women, as a part of their culture, are additionally tied to work. Beaver (1992) divided work in Appalachia into two categories:

> 'Work' and 'public work' have different meanings in rural Appalachia. Public work includes any job that entails working under someone else's authority for a regular salary, normally with no return from the job other than the wage earned and possible fringe benefits. Work in industry, education, or government would be included in this category. The broader category of 'work' includes any

> economic activity that contributes to subsistence or maintenance, with the specific exclusion of 'public work.' Public work most commonly results in wages; work may or may not result in wages. Work thus includes gardening, child rearing, housekeeping, farming, timbering, and mining for personal or private profit and not in industry, and a tremendous variety of other, often daily, activities of this nature. (p. 175)

Work for the women in this study used to be public work in the garment industry, but now it is work in terms of educational attainment. The importance of both forms of work for Appalachian women will affect their return to school on TRA funds, since in addition to receiving their educational expenses, they also receive an unemployment wage while attending school full-time.

Nontraditional Students

Basic skills training is an important factor for TRA students since most of them are nontraditional students in that they are often older, have not been to school in many years, and may need some reiteration of the basic skills. According to Degenaro (2000), nontraditional students may be "Students in required first-year writing courses at today's community colleges [who] represent many walks of life: first generation college students, nonnative speakers of English, nontraditionals, members of the working class, and countless other labels that designate the students as Other..." (p. 129). Further, nontraditional students are defined as those who are not the normal college-aged students between the ages of eighteen to twenty three, who have had life experiences in the workplace before attending college, and who often work while seeking to obtain a community college education.

When looking specifically at nontraditional students, like the women in this study, there are some specific characteristics about them that are important to note. Nontraditional students are defined in many ways, but for the purpose of my study, they are displaced garment workers who are older than the average 20 year old student and who are in the community college specifically for retraining. In Simmons' (1995) study of dislocated workers at the community college, she defined dislocated workers as a subgroup of nontraditional adult students.

In Greenwood's (1990) study of nontraditional women who reentered school for training, she found some specific characteristics of nontraditional women. She identified the problems that these women often faced as "time pressures and problems related to self-confidence, role definition, sense of direction, gender and age discrimination, lack of encouragement from the institution, and child care" (p. 133). The reentry women perceived some of these complications as potential problems, but often they found they were not issues once they returned to school.

Greenwood (1990) also found that the women in her study had the perception, based on others opinions, that they would not be able to learn successfully. The women in her study held "the unfounded self-perception that reentry women will not be able to learn, hence, will not be able to compete successfully in the classroom. They enter college, therefore, highly apprehensive learners, committed to a dream with little if any appreciation of their ability to attain it" (p. 134).

Community Colleges' Role in Retraining

The local or regional community college is the destination for retraining for TRA recipients. Currently, according to Therrien (1993), "community colleges have emerged as the largest provider of work-force retraining, aside from employers themselves" (p. 76). Community

colleges have always been a place for training in vocational fields, and now with an increased workforce needing retraining, they have also become the place for extensive retraining for students receiving TRA funding across the United States. In Simmons' (1995) study of dislocated workers being retrained at the community college, she found that "dislocated workers need strong basic skills not only to persist in the classroom but also to succeed in the workplace" (p. 55).

Carnevale (2000) examined the role of community colleges, and he discussed the importance of community colleges in retraining. He described five crucial roles of community colleges as retraining centers. Three of these roles apply directly to Creekview Community College and the TRA women in this study:

> Community colleges provide: [1] the minimum qualification for access to jobs with a future...[2] the pivotal educational institution in the nation's job training and retraining system [and 3] the primary educational resource for the least advantaged, such as dropouts, the educationally disadvantaged, immigrants, and dislocated workers who need a second chance to learn. (p. 4).

Community colleges are especially important in areas where workers have lost jobs and particularly in Appalachian regions. According to former West Virginia Governor, Gaston Caperton:

> Because of their flexibility and partnerships with business, labor, public schools, and colleges, community and technical colleges give youths and opportunity to gain the applied academic and technical skills needed to compete for good jobs, help businesses remain competitive, and help displaced workers transition with new careers. They are the focal point for our growing culture of lifelong learning. (as cited in Baldwin, 1996, p. 6)

Community colleges, therefore, serve many important roles within their community service area, and retraining is one of those roles.

The fact that community colleges offer a variety of curriculum choices and many different vocational retraining programs makes them the ideal environment for TRA students to come for retraining. Community colleges can provide some basic skills, like writing, math, and communication, in addition to providing technical skills required for many new jobs. The National Center for Research in Vocational Education advised (Hollenbeck et al., 1984):

> If Americans are serious about revitalizing our industrial base to meet current and future economic challenges, we need to be equally vigorous in pursuing human resource policies that ensure that our experienced workforce has the skills to complement this economic recovery and that it shares in the long-run benefits. (p. 18)

In its close connections with both industry and the community, community colleges try to prepare students for a changing workforce. Carnevale and Desrochers (1999) said, "General skills have become more important because—unlike in the old manufacturing-based economy in which productivity (high volume at low cost) was paramount—the new service-oriented manufacturing economy and growing services economy demand a more complex set of performance standards" (p. 33).

The community college is also trying to meet the needs of a work-world where larger and larger percentages of workers have at least some college education. Carnevale and Desrochers (1999) pointed out, "U.S. workers are highly educated: Seventy-four percent of education and health-care workers and 66 percent of office workers have completed at least some college. In fact, nearly six out of 10 prime-age U.S. workers have some college education, compared with two out of 10 in 1959" (p. 34). According to Lawrey, the large majority of TRA workers who

worked in the garment industry go into the areas of health-care and office work after graduation from the community college (as cited in Hall, 2000).

Creekview Community College and TRA Retraining

The community colleges in the regions where workers have been laid off have adapted particular procedures to better accommodate TRA students. At the beginning of the semester, Creekview Community College offers special sessions to help TRA students prepare for college life and also to assist with the paperwork that must be completed by each TRA student. These sessions include meetings with guidance counselors and program chairs who talk about different programs at the school and who also discuss the requirements for completion of these programs. Students are trained first about how to complete a Virginia Employment Commission Bi-Weekly Request for Allowances by Worker in Training Trade Act of 1974 (see Appendix A). The purpose of this document is to provide information to be completed by both the student and the community college where the student is doing retraining.

Students at Creekview are also given a "big picture" look at what the Trade Readjustment Act (TRA) and Training Trade Act will provide for them as they are engaged in their retraining. These are called the "Facts About Trade Act" (Creekview Community College/Explanation of TRA, 2000) and consist of:

1. TRA students must complete the Bi-weekly forms; these forms prove whether or not the student has been attending classes and has made progress in the classes.
2. TRA pays for tuition, fees, necessary supplies, needed books.
3. TRA will also pay for a student to get bi-weekly benefits when UI [unemployment insurance] is exhausted.

4. As long as a student has tuition, fees, etc. paid for by the TRA, the student must fill out the bi-Weekly TRA forms and turn them in on the due date.
5. Students who receive Pell Grant, SEOG, or Veteran's Benefits must report these funds to the Trade Act.
6. TAA will only pay for those classes that are necessary for the one curriculum in which you plan to receive a degree or certificate.
7. A student may be on Unemployment Insurance and TAA at the same time. This means that the student is receiving bi-weekly benefits from the UI and that tuition/fees and books/supplies are being paid by TAA.
8. TRA students do have a limit on the amount of money that each student can charge for books and supplies for the total time they attend college.

(p. 2)

The TRA students at the College have to keep track of all of the paperwork themselves, including taking pay forms to the Virginia Employment Commission office. They must also have a daily time sheet filled out by each of their instructors (when the class meets) to prove that they are attending school regularly (see Appendix B). According to the agreement between the community college and the TRAs' contract, TRA students are required to take 12 hours per semester. If they cannot, they must list the special circumstances that prohibit them from enrolling for 12 hours. These circumstances can include class cancellation, conflict in the times of classes, and not enough classes being offered (Creekview Community College, Explanation of TRA, p. 5).

TRA students come to the community college with a goal of both graduating and retraining into a better job. For the Appalachian culture in particular, as Beaver (1992) pointed out, "The most common way of becoming worthless is not to work" (p. 173). The community

college coursework becomes their work and also the means to their new public work. This newly developed value of school as work is also tied to the social acceptance of the TRA students, again especially in Appalachia. Beaver further elaborated on this value by saying, "But in terms of basic acceptance, which in the rural mountain community has a great deal to do with determining a comfortable existence even for those who are not dependent on agriculture, the criterion of work, and thus worth, is foremost" (p. 176).

Employers' Expectations for Writing and Its Importance

Since the community college is the place that many students come to be trained or retrained into the workforce, the curriculum, including academic curriculum, must address the concerns that students will face once they are in the workforce. Carnevale and Desrochers (1999) recognized that "Employers play a pivotal role in the U.S. job-related education and training system" (p. 35). This means that in some way, most classes in the community college, even the core classes, are connected to the needs and expectations of employers. Moreover, "The growth in highly skilled jobs in services, education, health care, and high tech confirms that modern employers increasingly are demanding that job seekers have some college coursework..." (p. 35).

Regardless of what curriculum TRA and other community college students study, they will inevitably work at a job that will require some form of written communication (Mikulecky, 2000). The current concerns that employers have about workplace literacy, and especially writing, are verified by the statistics that were provided by the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE). According to the USDOE:

> More than 40 million Americans 16 years of age and older have only rudimentary reading and writing skills...That's how many qualify at Level 1 in a five-level

> scoring of literacy. Level 1 means an individual can sign his or her name but can't make sense of a benefits write-up, reliably read a map, or accurately fill out a Social Security card application. (as cited in McGarvey, 1999, p. 1)

For specific problems that workers are experiencing in the workplace, Hays (1999), pointed to the fact, "in everyday work life, this deficiency translates into secretaries who can't write letters free of grammatical errors, workers who can't read instructions that govern the operation of new machinery, and bookkeepers who can't manipulate the fractions necessary to compute simple business transactions" (p. 2). Most notably however, 71% of 300 executives in a recent survey reported, "basic written communication was critical to meeting the changing needs in the workplace" (Hays, p. 3).

Employers have frequently expressed their needs for effective written communication skills. This need for written communication in the workplace is particularly important given that "American businesses generate an estimated 30 billion pieces of original writing each year. Workers on average spend one-third of their time on the job writing letters, memos and reports" (Write on, p. 1). It is important too to consider that "workers spend, on average, 20 to 25% of their time at work writing, no matter what their degree fields or professions. One study found that professional and technical employees spend 29% of their total time writing" (Virginia Tech, 1998-1999, Guide for Students, p. 4).

Defined often under the term "employability skills" within business research, writing is usually referred to as a basic competency skill for the workplace (Overtoom, 2000). Overtoom also gave a comprehensive business definition for the term employability skills: "employability skills are transferable core skill groups that represent essential functional and enabling knowledge, skills, and attitudes required by the 21st century workplace" (p. 3).

The popular press has printed many articles related to this employer dilemma of poorly prepared writers in the workplace. According to a report from Iowa State University, the expectations of written communication in business are that:

> Good written communication involves transmitting a clear and concise message. Clearness in written communication is being able to get the idea across to your specific audience. Conciseness was described as summarizing information accurately. Businesses expect college graduates to be clear and concise when using forms of written communication. The primary focus of written communication used by our contact organizations were letters and e-mails. Areas that businesses feel graduates need to improve on are summarizing information, correct use of grammar, spelling and proofreading skills. (Cole et al., 1999, p. 1)

It is important to note that sometimes employers provide their own literacy training for writing. In Dreyfus' (1999) presentation of case studies involving workplaces that offered literacy training, he found that many companies were addressing their needs for improving employees' basic writing and reading skills and that they were sometimes handled within the company. He described:

> The global shift to speedier, more complex factory methods has made blue-collar work more challenging—but American schools are producing workers who are simply not up to the task. Of the 105 Baldor employees who volunteered to be tested for the company's new education classes, 80 needed help. At Motorola just 25 out of 200 passed a similar basic-skills test for jobs at a new, highly automated factory in Schaumburg, Illinois, that makes cellular phones. (p. 1)

In most cases, writing skills are taught at the community college, especially when considering displaced workers who are at the college to be retrained. In this study, Developmental Writing 03 is the first writing class that the women will have in their college careers.

Furthermore, Saffer (1999) stressed the importance of learning to be better writers in order to have successful writing experiences in the workplace. She said, "taking English classes improves our communication skills, which are essential to every job" (p. 3). She also stressed, "learning how to construct sentences and paragraphs lays the groundwork for writing effective letters, essays, term papers, and reports" (p. 4). Similarly, Boosalis (1998), in his study of English as second language students in business writing classes, emphasized, "there is the need to be understood (illocution) and the need to have an effect on the reader" (p. 36). This being understood reiterates Saffer's emphasis on writing effectively.

Many writers and researchers concur that the best place to learn how to write more effectively for business is while in college. Gottlieb (2000) proposed, "the teaching of the fundamentals of clear communication to future business leaders while they are still in school is another very valuable technique for improving the flow of information from business to the public. Students can be taught to view writing as a social act, and to internalize the conventions of good writing" (p. 4).

What writing skills employers seek specifically involved many definitions from the literature. White (1997), in her description of effective writing in the workplace, recommended that writers in business know their audience, avoid punctuation and grammatical errors, make effective use of passive voice, and use gender-neutral writing. White added, "Nothing can kill your credibility in a business setting faster than to have grammatical and/or punctuation errors" (p.2).

Similarly, Ascher (1988), in her study of what skills employers want, found that writing skills meant, "writing legibly and completing forms accurately; writing standard English; selecting, organizing, and relating ideas, and proofreading one's own writing. Employers are more critical of writing than any other area, asserting that young workers have difficulty with all these aspects of writing and are unconcerned about accuracy" (p. 1).

When I examined handbooks and textbooks that employees use for their jobs and that were written by business professionals, I also found that these texts addressed many aspects of writing. Davis' (1983) Better Business Writing covered the writing process, purpose, paragraphs, sentences, words, spelling, punctuation, and mechanics as essential elements to improving writing for business. His book also provided specific instructions for types of business writing. In Baugh, Fryar, and Thomas' (1987) Handbook for Business Writing, they addressed prewriting, revising, choosing the right word, business vocabulary, gender-inclusive language, parts of speech, sentences and sentence patterns, punctuation and punctuation style, capitalization, abbreviations, numbers, and spelling. Additionally, they provided step-by-step instructions on how to write business specific writing, such as reports and memos. Similarly, Barry and Ellison's (1997) Business English for the 21st Century, covered rules of grammar and mechanics (grammar in great detail), spelling, business language, and sentence building.

The commonalities among these business texts exist in their focus on grammar and mechanics, spelling, process writing (including revision), word choice, and sentence structure. These foci match the literature in terms of what employers expect for effective writing in the workplace.

Employer and Employee Research

Because my study was conducted at Creekview Community College, I looked specifically at studies conducted by the College in terms of business expectations. The research department of Creekview Community College (CVCC) conducted an employer/graduate study in 1999. The survey collected data directly from employers who currently have CVCC graduates working for them. The college was interested in finding out if the employers' expectations for the CVCC graduates were being met and to what degree.

Writing skills were broken into three categories: general writing skills, letter writing skills, and report writing skills. General writing skills was further broken down into grammar/spelling, organization, and clarity. Employers rated, based on a five point scale, graduates as 3.79 on grammar and spelling. They rated those same previous students as 3.91 on organization and 3.94 on clarity.

The researchers used a five-point rating scale and asked the employers (37 out of 47 responded to the survey) questions relevant to the graduates' skills in the workplace. Over two-thirds (68%) of the graduates work in the field they were trained for at CVCC.

This report from Creekview is important for my study because it looks at the emphasis placed on writing by using it as a measure of employee performance. It is also important because it shows how graduates of the college are faring in the workplace. Additionally, this study and writing standards examined helped to verify the qualifications of writers in the workplace on the Writing Expectations of Employers' sheet used in this study (see Appendix C).

More specifically to developmental writers and their transition to the workplace, Agnew (1992) conducted a study on previous basic (developmental) writers at their new professions. Using interviews, she looked specifically at the writing skills required in the workplace and

asked prior developmental writing students how they fared in their workplace writing. Agnew suspected that "the writing context of the workplace is more favorable for basic writers" (p. 29), since they had worked intensively on the structure of good writing. She found that the basic writers in the workplace had a sense of autonomy over their writing. She explained that the former developmental writing students "were aware that they had been hired and valued for talents, skills, or purposes other than writing, giving them a psychological advantage when they did have to write" (p. 31). In terms of motivation, she discovered that "the workplace provides very powerful incentives to write well" (p. 32). These workers mentioned that at work, they had a paycheck instead of a grade and wanted to look professional to the public, their bosses, and coworkers.

Finally, Agnew said, "during interviews, FBW's [former basic writers] showed a real concern about writing well. Their awareness of its importance, their anecdotes about multiple revisions, editing, and consultations with coworkers, left little doubt that most of them took writing seriously enough to work hard at it" (p. 33). Developmental (basic) writing classes had prepared the former developmental students in the study to write successfully and with pride at their workplaces.

Conclusion

This review of the relevant literature has set the stage for the discussion of my study. Within this study that focused on writing as it occurs during a semester long developmental writing class, there were four TRA women from Appalachia who participated and shared their writing. As dislocated workers, they make up a unique population of learners. As nontraditional students, they faced challenges during their first semester of attendance at the community college. As they continue their studies at the college, they will further be prepared for reentry

into the workforce, where they will begin to use the writing skills they acquired during their developmental writing class.

Chapter Three

Research Methodology

The purpose of this study was to describe and examine changes in the writing of Trade Readjustment Act (TRA) students in Developmental Writing 03 at Creekview Community College. There were two main questions that framed this study:

- In what ways do the writing skills of TRA students change during a developmental writing class?
- In what ways do TRA students talk about themselves as writers while participating in a developmental writing class?

This chapter describes various components of the study. First, the research design that was used for this study is explained. Next there is a description about the setting of the study and the participants. Then there is a presentation of the data sources and collection procedures, including a timeline for the study. Following that section is a discussion of how the data analysis was performed. Finally there is a discussion of ways to promote reliability, validity, and trustworthiness specifically for this study about writing.

Research Design

Since evaluating writing is a subjective task, this study used more than one methodology to look at student writing. Bogdan and Biklen (1998) noted, "Qualitative research is descriptive. The data collected take the form of words or pictures rather than numbers…The written word is very important in the qualitative approach, both in the data and disseminating the findings" (p. 5). This qualitative descriptive study described and analyzed TRA women's writing and their attitudes toward writing during one semester of a developmental writing course. Attitudes included the ways the women talked about writing in the classroom context, questions they asked

in class, class participation, and how the women discoursed during group work and in pairs with their peers. Additionally, the women's attitudes about writing were ascertained from responses during their post-paper and exit interviews with me.

Further, Slavin (1992) described descriptive research as that which "simply seeks to describe particular phenomena as they are" (p. 13). This study is descriptive in that it described TRA women's writing. The study is also descriptive since as defined by Best and Kahn (1998), "The variables and procedures are described as accurately and completely as possible so that the study can be replicated by other researchers" (p. 129).

Finally, this study used a cross case analysis of individual case studies to report data and data analysis. Yin (1994) described case studies as descriptive research. As described by Wolcott (1992), "case study can be most appropriately regarded as an outcome or format for *reporting* qualitative/descriptive work" instead of as a method of collecting data (p. 36). Within each case study, there is a descriptive analysis of the women's writing and their attitudes as writers. Moreover, the case studies served as the basis for answering the research questions.

Context for the Study

The setting of this study was Creekview Community College, a rural community college in Virginia situated in the mountainous region named Appalachia. The college caters not only to those who come for retraining but also to students who work full-time and need to take courses at night.

In addition to students working on traditional and transfer credits, four TRA students were registered in the Developmental Writing 03 class that was used for conducting this study. There were several sections of the course, but many of the TRA students tested into

Developmental Writing 01, the writing class before 03. The Developmental Writing 01 class is where students with the lowest scores on the ASSET Placement Test or the Compass Placement Test (see Appendix D) are enrolled. After the successful completion of Developmental Writing 03, students may enroll in a college English class, such as freshman composition, for credit. Additionally, Developmental Writing 03 was chosen for this study because it is the first class in which students write complete essays. In the Developmental Writing 01 class, students only write only paragraph long assignments.

Furthermore, I chose this college for the research site because it had TRA students from closed garment factories. Many garment factories have closed in the College's service area and the school is convenient for students who receive TRA funding. The college was also chosen because it is close to my university.

Class and Teacher

After meeting with the administrators of the College and finding out the names of the Developmental Writing 03 teachers, I phoned Dr. Martin to set up a meeting and discuss my research. Dr. Martin was chosen because she received her Ph.D. from my university and because she knew the latest developmental writing pedagogy and practiced it within her class. She acknowledged the importance of having written discourse to work with in the class and the importance of Developmental Writing 03 as a gateway to college level writing as well as business writing. Also the time of the class was conducive to the time of day that I could attend regularly.

Dr. Martin has been a professor at Creekview Community College for eight years, and she also teaches sophomore English. Dr. Martin agreed to participate in the study and to share

the materials from her class. She signed the Consent Form for Teachers (see Appendix E). The Institutional Review Board approved the study and the consent forms (see Appendix F).

Once the proposed study was discussed with Dr. Martin, we decided that the research would take place over the Fall 2000 semester in her Developmental Writing 03 class, which met for fifty minutes each day. The class followed a course plan that was developed by the College (see Appendix G). The College Course Catalog (2000) described the course as one that "Emphasizes strategies within the writing process to help students with specific writing situations. Develops techniques to improve clarity of writing and raise proficiency to the level necessary for entrance into particular curricula" (p. 151). Students did not receive college credit for the course, but it was necessary to pass the class to move into credited writing classes. At the end of the course, a panel of English professors and Dr. Martin scored students' 300-500 word essays to make sure they were written well.

Student Participants

The primary participants in this study included four TRA women in the Developmental Writing 03 class. The TRA women were the only four TRA students in Dr. Martin's Developmental Writing 03 class. All four students agreed to participate and signed the Consent Form for Students (see Appendix C). All four students were displaced garment workers, and at the time of this study, they received TRA funds to attend Creekview Community College.

Additionally, all of the women also tested into the Developmental Writing 03 class based on their scores on a standardized placement test since Creekview Community College requires that students take a test before they are placed in an English class. Two different standardized tests are offered for testing writing skills. Two tests are offered because the primary test, the

Compass Placement Test (CPT), is administered on the computer. However, according to a guidance counselor at the College, many students are uncomfortable with using the computer and choose the pen and paper test, the ASSET Placement Test (APT). The College determines which scores place a student in which class (see Appendix D).

Data Sources

There were both primary and secondary data sources used in this study. Primary data sources were two in-class essays per TRA student, the students' out-of-class revised writing, the students' final exam essays, results of the Forced Choice Selection and Primary Trait Scoring, post-paper and exit interview questions and the women's responses, and the fieldnotes journal. Secondary data sources included instructional materials, the women's Learning Plus final report, and information from the college about TRA students. Each of the data sources and the collection procedures is described below. Data for the study were collected over the Fall 2000 academic semester at Creekview Community College. The time line for the study is provided in Table 3.1.

Primary Data Sources

Writing Samples and Scoring Procedures

In-class writing, out-of-class revised writing, and the final exam essays were assessed and analyzed. Examining all three types of writing provided more writing samples and multiple kinds of writing done at different times. The in-class essays were written on the first day of class and near the end of the semester. Dr. Martin provided a clean copy of the students' in-class essays to use for this study. The three sets of out-of-class revised essays were done throughout

Table 3.1 Schedule for Research

August 21, 2000	Began field research at Creekview Community College/collected first writing samples for Forced Choice Selection
August 22, 2000	Attended class; collected fieldnotes
August 23, 2000	Attended class; collected fieldnotes
August 28, 2000	Attended class; collected fieldnotes
August 29, 2000	Attended class; collected fieldnotes
August 31, 2000	Attended class; collected fieldnotes
September 1, 2000	Attended class; collected fieldnotes
September 5, 2000	Attended class; collected fieldnotes
September 6, 2000	Attended class; collected fieldnotes
September 7, 2000	Attended class; collected fieldnotes
September 8, 2000	Attended class; collected fieldnotes
September 12, 2000	First formal paper due/interviews with students following paper submission; Attended class; collected fieldnotes
September 12,2000	Primary Trait Scoring on first formal essays
September 13,2000	Attended class; collected fieldnotes
September 15,2000	Attended class; collected fieldnotes
September 18,2000	Attended class; collected fieldnotes
September 22,2000	Attended class; collected fieldnotes
September 25,2000	Attended class; collected fieldnotes
September 26,2000	Attended class; collected fieldnotes
October 3, 2000	Attended class; collected fieldnotes
October 4, 2000	Attended class; collected fieldnotes
October 5, 2000	Second formal paper due/interviews with students following paper submission; Attended class; collected fieldnotes
October 6, 2000	Primary Trait Scoring on second formal essays; Attended class; collected fieldnotes
October 12, 2000	Attended class; collected fieldnotes
October 16-17, 2000	Fall break for Creekview Community College/Facility Closed
October 18, 2000	Attended class; collected fieldnotes
October 19, 2000	Attended class; collected fieldnotes
November 14, 2000	Attended class; collected fieldnotes
November 15, 2000	Attended class; collected fieldnotes
November 16, 2000	Attended class; collected fieldnotes
November 19, 2000	Third formal paper due/interviews with students following paper submission
November 20, 2000	Primary Trait Scoring on third formal essays
November 20-22, 2000	Faculty In-service Days/Students not at school
November 23-24, 2000	Thanksgiving Break/School closed
November 28, 2000	Attended class; collected fieldnotes
November 29, 2000	Attended class; collected fieldnotes
November 30, 2000	Attended class; collected fieldnotes
December 1, 2000	Attended class; collected fieldnotes
December 4, 2000	Attended class; collected fieldnotes
December 5, 2000	Attended class; collected fieldnotes
December 6, 2000	Attended class; collected fieldnotes
December 7, 2000	Attended class; collected fieldnotes
December 11, 2000	Forced Choice Selection with raters occurred; Attended class; collected fieldnotes
December 12, 2000	Attended class; collected fieldnotes
December 15, 2000	Exit interviews with students/Last official day of class
December 15, 2000	Exam time/ last formal essays written by students in class; Primary Trait Scoring with final papers
December 18, 2000	Debriefed with instructor of Developmental Writing 03/ Field Research ends
February 14, 2001	Member check of quotations at CVCC

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the semester, and either the women printed a copy from their disk or Dr. Martin photocopied a clean copy for me before she graded the essays. This section contains the explanation of the Primary Trait Scoring and the Forced Choice Selection, which were the two ways that the writing was assessed. The reliability, validity and trustworthiness of these methods for assessing writing are discussed in a following section.

In-Class Writing. In-class writing for this study included the beginning and ending in-class essays that the TRA students wrote. The first essays were collected on the women's first day of class, and the second in-class essays were collected near the end of the semester. This writing was done during the fifty-minute class period and the students were not allowed to prepare in advance for the writing. The women were given topics from which to choose for the topic of their 300-500 word essay, and the essay could be written either by hand or on the computer. During their essay writing, the TRA students could not discuss the process with their peers, nor could they ask Dr. Martin any questions.

Forced Choice Selection. In order to determine if the TRA women's writing had improved over the course of the semester, the two in-class essays were judged in a Forced Choice Selection process. Beaven (1977) said that "although many research studies dealing with efficacy of various methods of instruction have failed to show significant improvement in writing, *improvement may occur over a much longer period of time than the six-, ten-, or even fifteen-week periods which teachers and researchers usually allow. Growth in writing occurs slowly*" (p. 136).

Because of the difficulty in trying to quantify improvement in writing after just a semester of instruction, Forced Choice Selection provided a comparative assessment between the beginning and ending in-class writing assignments. Kelly, Hall and Small (1984) used a similar method for evaluating essays. In their study, the researchers paired a beginning of the project

essay with an end of the project essay. Raters, unaware of which essays were from the beginning and which were from the end of the project, selected the better essay from a pair of essays written by each student.

For the Forced Choice Selection, three Ph.D. students and I discussed how to use the Forced Choice criteria to assess essays. The raters were Ph.D. students in Math Education, Vocational Technical Education, and Foreign Language Education. Lloyd-Jones (1977) proposed, "If enough reviewers of various biases accept a piece of writing as good…then the writing is accepted" (p. 46). Bias was limited because of the nature of the raters' Ph.D. programs and because they were not trained in evaluating writing in their programs.

The raters and I also reviewed the Writing Expectations of Employers sheet (see Appendix K). The sheet guided the raters because it represented the features of good writing in the academy and the workplace (Agnew, 1992; Cole, Manor, McDonald, Neuhaus, & Scanlan, 1999; Hays, 1999; Tyler, 1999). Although I discussed the Forced Choice Selection with the three raters, I did not take part in the rating because I knew which essay represented both the beginning and the ending of the semester and also because I later did a further in-depth analysis of the TRA women's writing.

During the Forced Choice Selection, the raters used the Employers' Expectation sheet holistically, which means "any procedure which stops short of enumerating linguistic, rhetorical, or informational features of a piece of writing" (Cooper, 1977, p. 4). Additionally, the raters used "the list of features only as a general guide—a set of reminders, a way of focusing—in reaching holistic judgment" (Cooper, p. 4). The criteria sheet was discussed point by point with the raters, so as to assure that they had a clear understanding of the ten points.

Each rater had the same four sets of two papers—one from each TRA woman's beginning in-class writing assignment and the last in-class writing assignment. These papers

were determined to be essays written under similar circumstances, that of no peer editing and in a timed environment. Furthermore, these two essays represented what the women brought with them in terms of writing and what skills they had developed by the end of the course.

To assure that the raters did not know which was the beginning essay and which was the ending essay, I assigned the two essays a letter "A" or "B," with some A's representing the beginning essays and some the ending essays. Moreover, all four of the students' essays were retyped exactly as I had received them (including any errors), so as to assure consistency and reduction of the chance that the raters would base their opinion on the handwriting or typing skills of the women. I kept a coding sheet so that I would know which essay was which.

The raters were only to determine which essay for each student was better, essay A or essay B. They did not have to score the essays or discuss why they had made the choices they did. The Forced Choice Selection provided evidence of any improvement in each woman's writing over the course of the semester.

Out-of-Class Revised Writing. The three out-of-class revised writings were the essays that the TRA students prepared both during class and at home. They were a narrative essay, a descriptive essay, and an example essay. For these 300-500 word essays, the women had the opportunity to do prewriting activities, to write multiple drafts, and to peer edit their essays. The final draft of these essays was used for the Primary Trait Scoring, for the interviews, where the women had their unmarked final draft in front of them, and for intensive examination of specific features of the essays that illustrated the scores on each Domain.

Final Exam Essay. A third example of writing done by the TRA students, during the final exam period, was a 300-500 word comparison/contrast essay. Students were given a list of topics appropriate for a comparison/contrast essay. These papers were also assessed with the Primary Trait rubrics and were further examined for specific features in each Domain.

Primary Trait Scoring. The results from the Primary Trait Scoring of essays provided another primary data source for this study and for an assessment of writing quality. Additionally, the rubrics used for scoring essays defined the features that demonstrate that quality. According to Lloyd-Jones (1977), "'writing' is synonymous with 'discourse.' And discourse will be discussed in terms of its *aims*, which relate to the functions of language, and in terms of its *features*, which are the separate elements, devices, and mechanisms of language…[T]o be informative about those judgments one must be able to describe writing in terms of its features" (p. 33).

The women's writing samples were rated using scoring rubrics from the Virginia Standards of Learning Tests, which were developed using Primary Trait principles and "focused holistic scoring" principles. These rubrics are used for scoring the Virginia Standards of Learning Test, a statewide assessment that emphasizes proficiency in writing, among other core subjects. The features for assessment are divided into three Domains and each Domain has a rubric that guides the assessment of the features of that Domain. The Domains are the Composing Domain, Usage/Mechanics Domain, and Written Expression Domain. Papers were read three times for each Domain and assessed holistically. Cooper (1977) discussed holistic evaluation of writing as "a guided procedure for sorting or ranking written pieces. The rater takes a piece of writing and…scores it for the prominence of certain features" (p. 3).

These Domains are part of a "Domain Scoring Model" (see Appendix I) (VA Department of Education, Part One). These rubrics were selected because they were effective for this study since, "these Domains are comprised of *developmentally* defined features of writing, features considered the main aspects of quality writing at any level—elementary, secondary, adult, or professional" (VA Department of Education, p. 1, Part One). Additionally, the rubrics are effective for scoring all kinds of writing or rhetorical modes.

The main foci of writing in each Domain are in Table 3.2 (VA Department of Education, pp. 2-7, Part One).

Table 3.2 Domain Explanations

Composing Domain	Usage/Mechanics Domain	Written Expression Domain
▸ Dominant impression or idea ▸ Focused central idea ▸ Key examples ▸ Layers of elaboration ▸ Transitions ▸ Organizational plan evident ▸ Consistent point of view ▸ Lack of digressions ▸ Strong lead/closure	▸ Punctuation ▸ Spelling ▸ Comma use ▸ Fragments/run-on sentences ▸ Verb tense consistency ▸ Using correct words ▸ Correct use of pronouns ▸ Uses active voice	▸ Specific word choice ▸ Purposeful tone ▸ Figurative language ▸ No awkward constructions ▸ Rhythmic flow ▸ Lack of vague words ▸ Normal word order ▸ Clear voice ▸ No imprecise, bland language

When scoring essays, one to four points were assigned for each of the three Domains based on the level of skills the TRA student demonstrated. Four was the highest possible score and one was the lowest possible score in each of the three Domains. The descriptions and details for assigning one through four points in each of the three Domains are provided in Appendix I. .

In order to describe the TRA students' writing progress on the out-of-class revised writing from the beginning, middle, and end of the Developmental Writing 03 course, each of the three assignments were scored. Additionally, Primary Trait scoring was used to score the final exam essays. Appendix J contains a sample of a Primary Trait Scored narrative essay, including my comments.

Furthermore, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) uses Primary Trait Scoring as developed by Lloyd-Jones. Specifically, the NAEP uses a combination of Primary Trait Scoring and "focused holistic scoring approach." This focused holistic scoring

approach, "requires scorers to rate the overall quality of writing, regardless of how students choose to respond to specific aspects of a given topic…NAEP scorers were given detailed scoring guides that focused their attention on specific characteristics of students' writing (organization, development, syntax, and mechanics)" (NAEP Facts, p. 1). For Primary Trait Scoring, "the goal is to define precisely what segment of discourse will be evaluated" (Lloyd-Jones, 1977, p. 37). Further, Primary Trait Scoring is one that "isolate[s] the universe of discourse and rate[s] writing samples in terms of their aptness within the prescribed range" (p. 33).

Interviews

After each of the three out-of-class revised essays were handed in and on the day of the final exam, I interviewed the four TRA students about their writing. Each of the women had agreed to answer some questions about their writing. There were three post-paper interviews and an exit interview.

Post-Paper Interviews. For interviews following their out-of-class revised writing submission, each woman answered three questions pertaining to her writing. The questions and interviews followed what Patton (1990) called "the standardized open-ended interview" (p. 280). This interview format "consists of a set of questions carefully worded and arranged with the intention of taking each respondent through the same sequence and asking each respondent the same questions with essentially the same words" (Patton, p. 280). The three questions were asked of each woman individually while she sat with her ungraded, unmarked final draft of her essay and me. Their essays gave them an opportunity to elaborate on their answers and to show parts of their paper to me as they spoke. The three questions used during the post-paper interviews are shown in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3 Post-Paper Interview Questions

Questions Asked During Post Paper Interviews
1. What did you feel most confident about while writing this paper?
2. What did you feel was your biggest challenge while writing this paper?
3. What did you focus on most while you were writing?

Each interview took between 10-15 minutes. The interviews were conducted while I took notes; no tape recording occurred, in order to maintain a comfortable environment for the interviews. Honest answers were more likely to be given if the TRA students were comfortable during the interview. The women had expressed their nervousness about the Developmental Writing 03 class and being back in school, so I thought that tape recording would only compound their nervousness. I felt that not tape recording the students was more important than the eye contact that may be lost while recording their responses by hand.

Exit Interviews. On the day of the final exam, an exit interview was conducted with each of the four TRA women. The exit interview was an open-ended interview with each woman answering the same five questions. The exit interview questions are presented in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4 Exit Interview Questions

Questions Asked During Exit Interview
1. How do you feel your writing has most improved this semester?
2. What three things are you most confident about in your writing?
3. What do you feel is still the hardest thing for you in your writing?
4. What do you now feel is the most important aspect (part) of writing?
5. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about you and your writing?

This exit interview was a closure activity for students to talk about their writing experiences from the writing class. One week before the exit interview, students were asked to collect all of their essays from the class (from their class disks) and to compile them into a single packet. These writings were to help students recollect their writing process while reflecting on their own writing. The essays were in front of us during the interviews.

Additionally, the students were given the questions a week before the interview and were asked to make notes on their essays and the prepared questions. I attached a letter explaining the exit interview (see Appendix K). The TRA students were told that these answers would be kept confidential from the instructor until the study was finished. Each woman was asked the same questions and then was asked further probing questions (for elaboration) during the interview. Each individual interview took 15-20 minutes.

During the exit interview, the women were asked the questions one at a time. The women read from their sheet of notes and I recorded additional comments on a separate sheet. When the interview was finished, the women turned in the sheet that they had made notes on in advance. Since the interview was similar to the post-paper interviews in that I asked a question and then gave the women time to answer, the TRA students were accustomed to being interviewed using prepared questions.

Fieldnotes

As a participant observer, I kept fieldnotes of observations and my reflections during each class that I attended. These reflections were written both during the class and also when I typed each day's notes. Specifically, fieldnotes included the interaction that the TRA students had with Dr. Martin, each other, other students in the class and me, including time before,

during, and after class. Additionally, the notes contained main points of instruction (for example, fragments, thesis statements…) covered and focused on by Dr. Martin during the class period, including homework assignments and notes on the board. The classes were not tape-recorded. Each day that I attended the class, I wrote in a notebook notes about what had transpired that day. I was in the class as an occasional helper and observer. My participation included working with the computers and answering students' computer questions, and also I wrote some notes on the board for Dr. Martin.

Secondary Data Sources

Other sources from the Developmental Writing 03 class and Creekview Community College provided secondary data for this study. Instructional materials included the textbook for the class, College Writing Skills with Readings (Langan 2001); the final scores of the women's performance on the Learning Plus Editing Module 4; and handouts that Dr. Martin provided for the class, including assignments and the course description. The textbook provided class assignments and served as a resource for understanding the instructional procedures and materials of Developmental Writing 03. The Learning Plus scores simply gave the names of the modules that the women had completed, for example, fragments, and their final scores (see Appendix L). The materials from Dr. Martin provided an overview of what writing the women worked on and when assignments were due (see Appendix G).

Materials from Creekview Community College that were included in this study were handouts from financial aid and guidance about TRA procedures; scores on placement tests from guidance; and statistics from the Student/Employer survey conducted by the College, as discussed in the Literature Review. The handouts from financial aid and guidance helped build

an understanding of how students are held accountable during their attendance at the College (see Appendices A, B and D).

Data Analysis

The TRA women's writing samples collected for this study and the results of the Forced Choice Selection and Primary Trait Scoring were analyzed in depth. A case study for each woman contains the analyses of her writing and focuses on her writing and attitudes about writing. Each individual's case study, as Bogdan and Biklen (1998) described is "constructing a picture that takes shape as you collect and examine the parts" (pp. 6-7). Further, the case studies are observational in nature as they included both "a particular place in the organization" and "a specific group of people" (Bogdan & Biklen, p. 55). The women's case studies are organized in a format that provided the best way to look closely at the women's essays and their attitudes about their writing and the class. Following is a description of how the intensive analysis of the women's writing features was done, followed by a description of how the cross-case analysis was developed.

In-Class Writing Analysis

Since the women wrote their first in-class writing on the first day of class, this essay and the last essay were the first essays I closely analyzed using the Employers' Expectations sheet. In other words, I compared what the women had written to the expectations of employers. Each woman's beginning and ending in-class essay was closely examined and on each point of strength or weakness, support from the essay was provided. Additionally, the women's retyped in-class essays are provided in Appendices M, N, O, and P. Furthermore, a word count, sentence count and average word per sentence count accompanied the analysis (Note: Run-ons were

included as separate sentences, i.e. each part of the run-on and fragments were counted as a sentence, and the same procedure was used for out-of-class revised writing and the final exam essays).

Out-of-Class Revised Writing Analysis

Next in each case study, the three out-of-class revised essays were presented chronologically, or as they were written during the semester. The narrative, descriptive, and example essays were analyzed, using each woman's writing as support for why they scored as they did in each of the Domains. Each woman's writing was closely analyzed as it reflected the writing traits inherent in each of the three Domain rubrics—Composing Domain, Usage/Mechanics Domain, and Written Expression Domain. Based on the three Domains, the women's writing was examined in terms of their individual improvement.

Post-Paper Interview Analysis

At the end of the discussion about the women's in-class and out-of-class writing is an analysis and discussion of their three post-paper interviews. The interviews were presented this way so that the differences and similarities in the women's different interviews could be ascertained. Additionally, my reflections on the interviews were included in the analyses.

Fieldnotes Analysis

In order to further understand the women's experiences in the Developmental Writing 03 class, an analysis of the fieldnotes journal was included in the individual case studies.

Additionally, the fieldnotes analysis provided the context of the class section that was presented before each case study.

All of the fieldnotes for the semester were read and reread at the end of the data collection. Codes that related to the research questions and the context of the study were established. Miles and Huberman (1994) described coding as analysis. They said, "To review a set of field notes, transcribed or synthesized, and to dissect them meaningfully, while keeping the relations between the parts intact, is the stuff of analysis" (p. 56). These codes were researcher-designated and were related to evolving themes and context about the women and their writing habits, attitudes and talk. The categories assigned for the codes were: class participation (CP); women's attitudes toward writing (WW); women's attitudes toward school (WS); group work (GW); and class work that reflected writing in the workplace (WP). At the onset of analysis, "asking questions" (AQ) had been a separate category, but once the notes had been coded and listed on their own page, I decided that "asking questions" actually represented another dynamic of class participation.

I examined all of the fieldnotes for the semester and marked the code by each occurrence of that particular category. Then, individual pages with the code marked at the top were created, with each occurrence of that code listed by date in chronological order. I made an analysis of the fieldnotes after they were coded and categorized, which represented an inductive analysis. Patton (1990) defined inductive analysis as that in which "the patterns, themes, and categories of analysis come from the data; they emerge out of the data rather than being imposed on them prior to data collection and analysis" (p. 390). Further, I did not record the fieldnotes with a theme or category in mind, I recorded descriptions about the TRA women, and the categories and codes emerged after the collection. The fieldnotes contributed to an understanding of the women's participation in the Developmental Writing 03 class and also how their essays evolved.

Cross Case Analysis

Once all of the case studies were written, I further analyzed them across cases to determine the women's commonalities in their writing. Using tables representing the expectations of Employers and Domains, I determined if the women had shown improvement in their in-class and out-of-class revised writing. Furthermore, I analyzed their writing commonalities using the three Domains and also the Employers' Expectations sheet. Additionally, I analyzed the commonalities of the women's final exam essays and in the women's attitudes about themselves as writers.

Ways to Promote Reliability, Validity, and Trustworthiness

Construct and Content Validity for Measuring Writing

In terms of validity, this descriptive study had both construct and content validity. Construct and content validity are evidenced in both of the tools used for the Primary Trait Scoring and Forced Choice Selection. Cooper and Odell (1977), who talked about ways to evaluate writing said, "We assume that teachers and researchers are primarily concerned with content and construct validity" (p. xii). Since this study was about writing and a writing class, content and construct validity are applicable to the research.

Construct Validity

Construct validity was defined by Slavin (1992) as "the degree to which a scale or test has a pattern of correlations with other variables that would be predicted by a sound theory" (p.

244). Furthermore, Krathwohl (1998) discussed construct validity as "a test or measure [that] behaves as the definition of the construct predicts that it should" (p. 682).

Construct validity exists in the rubrics used for scoring the essays. Cooper and Odell said, "If a measure has construct validity, then it actually measures the construct of interest, in this case, writing ability or writing performance" (pp. xi-xii). Dr. Martin and I reached consensus on the theoretical agreement between what is taught in the Developmental Writing 03 class and what is covered in the each of the Domains. In the class, students are evaluated on their composing skills, usage/mechanics in their writing, and also their written expression in their essays. This agreement is consonant with the Virginia Department of Education rubrics as representative of K-14 writing. Additionally, the plan for the developmental writing course coincided with the rubrics. Furthermore, the rubrics were designed to rate writing features and this study used them for that purpose.

Construct validity also exists in the Employers' Expectations sheet used for the Forced Choice Selection. The Writing Expectations of Employers sheet (see Appendix C) categorizes the characteristics for written discourse that community of college developmental writing teachers and also employers expect. The sheet was based on my experience, the Employer/Graduate survey at CVCC, Dr. Martin's expectations, and the review of the literature related to writing in the workplace (Ascher, 1988; Barry & Ellison, 1997; Baugh, Fryar, & Thomas, 1987; Davis, 1983; White, 1997). To further verify the ten points on the sheet, two professors of business management and the researcher who conducted the Employer/Graduate study at CVCC were polled. They agreed that the ten points reflected the expectations of employers. Although the sheet did not provide a scoring system, the women's writing could be described and analyzed in terms of the ten expectations on the sheet.

Content Validity

Content validity also exists in the Primary Trait Scoring rubrics and the sheet used for the Forced Choice Selection. Gay (1996) said, "content validity is determined by expert judgment. There is no formula by which it can be computed and there is no way to express it quantitatively" (p. 140).

Not only do the Domain rubrics match the research in the field of developmental writing, they also coincide with the instructional materials used in the course (Holmsten, 1999; Lunsford, 1997; Murray, 1997; Shaughnessy, 1977). For example, Dr. Martin devoted class time to covering fragments, the Learning Plus editing module addressed fragments, and the Usage/Mechanics Domain highlighted the non-use of fragments. The writing assignments of the course and my fieldnotes of what occurred in class also reflected the traits covered in the rubrics. Additionally, the rubrics had the flexibility to be used to score a variety of types or modes of writing, including those that occurred in the Developmental Writing 03 class. The rubrics reflect what is expected in good writing.

Further, Cooper and Odell (1977) discussed content validity in writing and said, "if a measure has *content validity*, then it is an appropriate measure for a particular writing program. It actually measures what writers have been practicing in a course or program" (p. xi). Another example of content validity was Dr. Martin's emphasis on the writing process, which the Domain rubrics address in the Composing Domain.

The Employers' Expectations sheet used for the Forced Choice Selection also had content validity. Since this study was examining both the standards of developmental writing and employer's expectations for good writing, the sheet reflected the commonalities between both kinds of writing.

Reliability for Measuring Writing

Krathwohl (1998) defined reliability as "evidence of consistency of measurement over items, over tests, or over time" (p. 691). Additionally, Cooper and Odell (1977) defined reliability in terms of writing; "if a measure or measurement scheme is reliable, it is fair to writers, permitting them to demonstrate what they can really do…To test ability to write in different modes…or to write for different purposes…we need multiple pieces on multiple occasions" (p. xi). Given these definitions, reliability exists in the examination of the writing samples; whereas, there were various samples of writing taken on different occasions from each TRA student.

Triangulation is important in maintaining reliability. Pittman and Maxwell (1992) defined triangulation as "the use of multiple sources and types of data to support or contradict an interpretation" (p. 748). They also said, "evaluators must have multiple sources of evidence regarding any claim of regularity, discrepancy, or other pattern constellation…this layering of data across time, informants, events documents, and so on is an essential validation technique for conclusions and recommendations" (Pittman & Maxwell, p. 763). Therefore, this study used triangulation.

This study used various methods and multiple sources of data to assure that different forms of data were collected during the semester long study. This study used multiple samples of the TRA women's writing, done under varying circumstances and at different times during the semester. The essays were examined in different ways, including close analysis using Primary Trait Scoring and Forced Choice Selection results. Also the study looked not only at the women's written essays, but also included two types of interviews about writing and fieldnotes taken from the developmental writing classroom.

With both assessments of writing systems, reliability was attained. For the Primary Trait Scoring of the out-of-class revised essays and the final exam essay, I scored all of the essays with another rater. Krathwohl (1998) described reliability as "the consistency of two or more observers in describing the same phenomenon" (p. 340). The rater scored the first set of essays at the same time that I did. Once I had scored the remaining essays from throughout the semester, the same rater scored the essays as a check for my scores. As discussed in the data analysis section of this chapter, the rater received a training session on how to use the rubrics, and we scored all of the essays and compared scores using the rubrics from each of the three Domains. Having another rater use the same rubrics to score the same essays provided an affirmation of my scoring. The rater and I did not talk to each other to reach a consensus of our scores after scoring. The results of my scoring and the rater's scoring are reported in each case study.

Trustworthiness

The trustworthiness, credibility and bias of this study are explained using the descriptions provided by Goetz and LeCompte (1984).

Trustworthiness and Credibility

Extended time was spent in the setting. I spent thirty-eight days in the Developmental Writing 03 class over the Fall 2000 semester. The days in class covered a range over the beginning, middle and ending of the course. As a participant observer, I had access to the TRA students' comments about writing and their activities in class.

Data was collected over a long period of time. During the Fall 2000 semester, I collected the TRA students' writing from the beginning, middle and ending of the class. Further, the

women were interviewed at different points during the semester. Comparisons of the students' essays also consisted of essays collected at different points and under different conditions in the semester.

Consistent questions were asked of the four participants during the course of the Fall 2000 semester. The same set of three questions was asked to the women at different times during the semester. The exit interview questions were extended versions of the post-paper interview questions.

When the TRA students were interviewed, their essays were in front of them. They were not expected to talk about their writing without the chance to look at their most current essay. Further, during the exit interviews, the women also had all of their essays in front of them while they were interviewed.

Additionally, I debriefed with the teacher. We spent an afternoon after the semester was over talking about the class, the students, and how I would proceed with evaluating their writing. The debriefing provided closure on the semester long research for both Dr. Martin and me.

During the research, I was a participant observer. I became a part of the classroom context and was a trusted helper in the class. Whenever the TRA women had questions about the computer, and if Dr. Martin was busy helping someone else, the women asked me their computer-related questions.

I used different methods to look at the participants in the study and their participation in the Developmental Writing 03 course and these different methods represented triangulation. In addition to scoring, rating and closely analyzing their writing, I also conducted interviews and collected fieldnotes during the class.

Verbatim accounts, including direct quotations, of the activities and dialogue in the class were used in the data analysis. In particular, the case studies on each woman and the description

of the context of the class contained quotations and direct accounts of what had occurred and been said in the classroom.

The participants in the study, the four TRA students, did a member check of the draft of the data. I met with or talked to each woman individually during the Spring 2001 semester and went over the quotations and descriptions that I had attributed to each of them. They agreed with my presentation of their words and actions.

In April 2001, a peer audit was done with one of the raters. Specifically, she checked the fieldnotes for accuracy in the presentation of the data analysis. We found a few words that were not quoted exactly and I corrected them within the document.

Furthermore, fieldnotes were kept for every day that I was in the Developmental Writing 03 classroom. These notes described what had occurred in the class and my reflection on those events. At the end of the day, when I typed the fieldnotes, I added any further reflections that I may have had when rereading the notes.

Finally, I looked for disconfirming, as well as confirming, evidence to test assertions in the final analysis. When I had assertions related to the women's writing traits, I considered them in the case study, whether they were found to be true or not. For instance, I assumed that the women's scores would improve essay by essay in all of the Domains and when they did not, I addressed this disconfirmation in the writing analysis and sought possible reasons for why they did not improve.

Bias

Although bias was kept to a minimum during this study, there were some components of the research that may have inadvertently led to bias. My role in the research, as described by Bogdan and Biklen (1998), "was to add knowledge, not to pass judgment on a setting" (p. 34).

This study did not judge the pedagogy of the professor, the lives of the women, or compare their situations as displaced garment workers to my own life's expectations. I was very different from the four TRA women, yet still they became comfortable with my presence in the setting. Bogdan and Biklen also said that "qualitative researchers try to acknowledge and take into account their own biases as a method of dealing with them" (p. 34).

Further, since the research was descriptive, I came to know the women as more than just students in the Developmental Writing 03 class. The TRA students developed trust and comfort with me as a participant observer. Sometimes they confided stories about their personal lives and other aspects of school. They shared their life problems with me before, during and after class. Additionally, as Bogdan and Biklen (1998) described, "qualitative researchers guard against their own biases by recording detailed fieldnotes that include reflections on their own subjectivity" (p. 34). These confidences are not included in this study or my fieldnotes since this study is about writing.

The other condition, which may have led to some bias, is that during the post-paper and exit interviews, the women's responses were not tape recorded. The women's responses to the questions were hand recorded as accurately as possible and most of the notes from the interviews were limited only to the answers to my questions.

CHAPTER 4

Case Studies and Analysis

This chapter presents the data that were collected during the Fall 2000 semester of Developmental Writing 03 class at Creekview Community College. First there is a description of the course context for the case studies, which details the chronological order and some of the daily content of the Developmental Writing 03 course. Next is the format in which each of the case studies will be presented. Then there is an individual case study for each of the Trade Readjustment Act (TRA) students: Elsie, Lauren, Angie and Danene. Finally, there is an analysis of the case studies across cases.

Course Context of Case Studies

Because Developmental Writing 03 involved a variety of types of writing, writing started early in the semester for the students. The students had the opportunity to demonstrate their writing skills on the first day of class. On August 21, 2000, Dr. Martin had the students do an in-class writing assignment that I would use as their writing sample from the beginning of the semester. Even though students were required to have typewritten their essays for the out-of-class revised writing, the in-class essays and final exam essay could be typewritten or handwritten.

During the early days of the semester, Dr. Martin gave the students a tentative schedule. This schedule informed students that their first essay, the narrative essay, would be due on September 12, 2000.

In order to prepare for the narrative essay, the students read a variety of narrative essays, discussed thesis statements, did example exercises from the book aloud in class, and began

writing in their journals. On August 28th, the students had their first journal writing exercise in class (Fieldnotes). Students worked on thesis statement exercises from their book on August 31st (Fieldnotes). On September 5th, they wrote drafts for their narrative essays (Fieldnotes). Students had their first peer editing day on September 8th and were encouraged by Dr. Martin to be critical of each other's papers (Fieldnotes). They handed in their narrative essays on September 12th.

On the day after handing in their narrative essays, Dr. Martin began discussing and preparing students for their descriptive essays. Students were encouraged to practice writing in their journals on assigned topics during class time. Dr. Martin's students also began working on the Learning Plus program Unit Four, which focused on editing skills in writing. Learning Plus is a computer program with individual modules focused on varying topics, in this case topics about editing and usage in writing. A module consists of written lessons about a topic (for example fragments), examples and practice exercises, and then an exercise for students to complete. The completed exercises' scores register into the computer data bank under each student's name. Students were also required to do the pretest and posttest. They were given other days to work on Learning Plus throughout the semester, but students were required to go to the computer lab or the library in order to finish Unit Four by the end of the semester.

As the semester progressed and students were preparing to write their descriptive essays, more and more class time was focused on how to go through the writing process to write a paper. By September 25, students wrote their rough drafts and/or prewriting activities in class (Fieldnotes). Dr. Martin circulated through the class to help students with their writing and to answer questions (Fieldnotes, 9/25/00). On September 26, students did activities from their textbook (Fieldnotes). Exercises from the book focused on specific word choice, with a concentration on verbs (Fieldnotes, 9/26/00). Students continued to do textbook exercises in

class and discuss them. On October 3rd, they practiced eliminating fragments and worked on distinguishing the difference between dependent and independent clauses (Fieldnotes).

On October 4th, the students worked on the peer editing of their descriptive papers (Fieldnotes). On October 5th, the students handed in final drafts of their descriptive essays.

After students handed in their descriptive essays, they started to prepare for their final out-of-class, revised essay, the example paper. These essays were ones that were developed by example. On October 6th, students worked on journal writing with a suggested topic from Dr. Martin and then they spent the rest of the class working on their Learning Plus modules (Fieldnotes).

On October 12th, Dr. Martin placed some of the students' graded essays on the overhead (Fieldnotes). Students discussed each other's essays' strengths and weaknesses. On November 14th, students worked on their second drafts and editing for the example essay (Fieldnotes). These essays were not collected until November 30th, since Dr. Martin was ill and substitute teachers worked with the students on Learning Plus and exercises in the book.

After the students discussed and worked on their revisions for the example essay, Dr. Martin shifted the classroom focus to the cause and effect essays. On November 29th, the students discussed how correlation is not causation and how they should only focus on either cause or effect in their essays (Fieldnotes). Students spent some time free writing (Fieldnotes, 11/29/00). During class on November 30th, students continued to talk about cause and effect (Fieldnotes). On December 1st, students had an open discussion of cause and effect statements, for example "effects of mothers in the workforce" (Fieldnotes).

The cause and effect essays were the last in-class essays that the students wrote. The students were told that the cause and effect essays would be evaluated by Dr. Martin and other English teachers in the department. According to the English Department's policy, this outside

evaluation would not determine whether the students passed the class or not, but instead would provide some additional feedback. Also, if there were ever a question as to whether a student would be passed to move into other English classes, these in-class essays would be considered. I analyzed these last in-class essays and compared them to the first in-class essays using the Ten Expectations of Business/Instructor sheet (see Appendix C). Students wrote their in-class essays on December 5th. They were given a list of options from which to write. These options consisted of:

- Having more mothers in the workforce has changed the way many kids grow up.
- Society would benefit if nonviolent criminals were punished in ways other than jail time.
- Americans tend to get married later in life than they used to.
- Growing up in my family has influenced my life in significant ways.
- My relationship with X has changed over time.

After the last in-class essay, classroom discussion in Developmental Writing 03 continued to focus on grammar and mechanics as students prepared to write their final exam essay, the comparison/contrast essay. Students did practice exercises during class time and also made lists comparing/contrasting different things. On December 7th, students did practice exercises comparing and contrasting two things that are not alike, for instance Scrabble and volleyball (Fieldnotes). Students focused on pronoun usage using examples from their textbook on December 11th (Fieldnotes).

Students in the class got their scored in-class essay back from Dr. Martin on December 12th. They spent most of the class time correcting their essays. The remainder of the class time was spent talking about the final exam essay, the comparison and contrast essay. Dr. Martin told

the students that they could write their paper by hand or on the computer and that they would have two hours to complete the assignment (Fieldnotes, 12/12/2000).

Dr. Martin instructed the students to choose either to compare or contrast in their final exam essays. The students had been given a list of topics to choose from for their essays (see Appendix Q). Students wrote their final exam essays on December 15th.

Case Study Format

So as to best describe each of the TRA women's writing experiences, each woman's writing and activities during class are discussed separately in her own case study. The case studies are presented about Elsie, Lauren, Angie and Danene, respectively. Each case study first presents an examination of each of woman as she entered the Developmental Writing 03 class. This examination includes both a personal description of her and her beginning writing skills.

Next in each case, the woman's writing is examined. Each case study looks at the in-class writings that were analyzed using the criteria drawn from the expectations of employers. The raters used these criteria to select which of the two in-class writings were better, the one done at the beginning of the semester or the one done at the end. I then used the same criteria to guide an in-depth analysis of the writings based on the Ten Expectations of Employers sheet (see Appendix C).

Each woman's out-of-class, revised writing is then presented by assignment—narrative, descriptive and example. The final exam essay is presented as a separate assignment toward the end of the case study. I present an in-depth analysis of each essay based on the descriptions from the rubrics and offer examples from the students' essays. Woven throughout each case study are details that I gathered about the women during class. These details were pulled from the

fieldnotes I kept throughout the semester, and I inserted the activities the students participated in during class, comments that they made, and any other details of interest about the students.

Following the out-of-class revised essays, I present a discussion of the data from the interviews with each woman, and after the analysis of the final exam essay, I present the data from the exit interview.

Finally, at the end of each case study, I discuss the women as writers. I analyzed their strengths and weaknesses as writers. Also I looked at their attitudes about themselves as writers that they expressed during the post-paper interviews and in class discussions. I concluded each case with an epilogue about how the women are doing since they left the Developmental Writing 03 class.

Elsie's Case Study

In her late forties, Elsie is the oldest of the Trade Readjustment Act (TRA) funded women included in this study. With short, white blonde hair and a deeply creased face that reveals some life struggles, Elsie actually looks older than her nearly fifty years. She is married and has three children. One of her daughters, who also worked in a garment factory, and grandchildren are currently living with Elsie and her husband.

Elsie told me that she had worked in garment factories for a total of 29 years and had known Angie, another TRA student for eight years. In fact, she worked with Angie and Danene at the same garment factory until it closed in May 2000. Elsie, who hails from the Appalachian region of Virginia, plans to stay in the area when she finishes.

Elsie tested into the Developmental Writing 03 class with a 52 on her Compass Placement Test. She was taking the 03 class as part of her first semester in college, after 35 years out of school. She plans to pursue a program of study in human services.

Because the fall semester was Elsie's first time in college courses, she told the other TRA students and me early in the semester that she was very nervous. She said, "It's the hardest thing about coming back to school after 33 years…Ain't like being young. So much pressure. Go home to can tomatoes, run two grandchildren, do homework" (Fieldnotes, 9/1/00). Even though Elsie commented frequently about the mounting responsibilities of returning to school, she still attended every Developmental Writing 03 class during the semester. She said too, "Things have changed in the 30 years since I have been in school" (Fieldnotes, 9/6/00).

Consequently, at the beginning of the semester, Elsie did not describe herself as a writer and was nervous about writing for Dr. Martin. She felt that her spoken and written words, as representative of the Appalachian dialect, were all that she knew and that no one before had told her they were wrong (Fieldnotes, 9/6/00). Her feelings of not being properly prepared for academic writing made Elsie even more nervous about the writing she would do in the Developmental Writing 03 class.

In-Class Writing

Elsie wrote her first in-class essay on August 21, 2000, the first day of class. For the first in-class essay [151 words; 13 sentences; 11 words per sentence average,], Elsie handwrote her essay about herself and how she came to Creekview Community College (see Appendix M.1).

For the last in-class essay [226 words; 18 sentences; 12 words per sentence average] that Elsie wrote on December 5, 2000, she chose her topic from a list Dr. Martin provided. Elsie chose option three on the choice sheet: "Americans tend to get married later in life than they used to" (see Appendix M.2).

Both of these in-class essays were given to the raters for the Forced Choice Selection. When the raters were given the essays marked A and B, one representing Elsie's (named simply "Student One" on the papers) first in-class essay and the other representing her final in class essay, the raters unanimously chose Elsie's later essay as the better of the two.

After the Forced Choice Selection, I further examined Elsie's paper based on the sheet of Ten Writing Expectations of Employers (see Appendix C). Elsie's beginning untitled essay was only two paragraphs long and showed no evidence of a writing process. The paper was organized like an introduction to "Elsie the student." Her ideas, however, were succinct and clear: "I am very nervous about being in school since I haven't been for thirty-five years."

Additionally, Elsie's first in-class essay had no clear thesis statement except perhaps her opening sentence, "My name is Elsie and I am a TRA student," since the whole essay is about her. If this sentence was the thesis, then there was support that told about Elsie the student. In this essay, all of her sentences were short and choppy: "I have been a factory worker for at least twenty-nine years." She misspelled "alot" and "prombles" (problems) and had a few mistakes with commas, but nothing ungrammatical or mechanical detracted from her essay. Elsie hand-wrote this first essay.

Based on Elsie's description of herself as a returning student, there was almost a sense of nervousness exhibited in Elsie's beginning essay, which would coincide with what I had noted in my fieldnotes; she made several comments about being back in school after so long and how so much had changed (Fieldnotes, 9/1/00; 9/6/00). She closed her essay by saying, "When I sat down in front of this computer it made me think about all the things I don't know and how the world has changed, and left alot [sic] of us behind."

Elsie's last essay was more organized and also demonstrated some attempt at editing and drafting, parts of the writing process. Her words and ideas were presented in a clear, logical

fashion: "Education has become more important to women than in years past. A woman has the opportunity to better herself in the world of today." She offered a clear thesis: "As years pass women's views of marriage change along with them." There was a lot of support for her thesis: "Women are finically [sic] able to take care of themselves and make dessions [sic] for their own lives." She also had a better sentence variety than in her first essay.

In Elsie's ending essay, I discovered that her grammar and mechanics were not as efficient as in her beginning essay. This increase in grammatical and mechanical errors could be due to the longer length of the last essay than the first essay. She had many spelling errors, mistakes with commas, and included sentences in paragraphs that did not align with the topic sentence. Since Elsie's paper was handwritten instead of done on the computer, she did not have spell-check to help her with her spelling. The raters' decisions are reflected, I believe, in the better control that Elsie had over her writing in the end essay.

Out-of-Class Essays/Revised Writing

Narrative Essay

Elsie, on several occasions, told the other TRA students and me that she was really concerned about this narrative essay since she did not know how to use the computer. Elsie and I had a conversation about working with the computer and being in school. She told me she had never turned on a computer until two weeks ago and that she had a lot of trouble "seeing" how to prepare to type. I noticed she was typing one letter and then hitting space. I helped her erase what she had done and showed her how to start over. She told me, "things sure have changed in the 30 years since I have been in school. I was working a job where I did the same thing day in and day out and there was no need to know how to type on the computer" (9/7/2000).

The first peer-editing day was on September 8, 2000. Elsie and Angie worked together on editing each other's papers. As Angie offered advice to Elsie on her essay about the hardships of homework, Elsie said, "That's what I'm after. Need to get it together." Angie told her, "You need a quiet place to go…be sure to get homework in there. Tell what else is in the bedroom. How homework all ties into it." Elsie agreed and told Angie, "More detail, I would say" (9/8/2000).

When Elsie handed in her essay, Dr. Martin gave me an unmarked copy. The day after the narrative essay was handed in, I conducted the Primary Trait Scoring on Elsie's and the other TRA students' essays. Elsie's scores, based on the rater's and my Primary Trait Scoring, in each of the three domains—Composing, Usage/Mechanics and Written Expression—are represented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Elsie's Scores on Narrative Essay

	Researcher's Scores	Rater's Scores
Composing Domain	2	2
Usage/Mechanics Domain	2	2
Written Expression Domain	2	2
Total Narrative Essay	6	6

The rater and I scored Elsie's narrative essay the same in each Domain. In Elsie's first essay [449 words; 30 sentences; 15 words per sentence average], "The Greatest Hardships of Homework," (see Appendix M.3) she had difficulties in all three of the domains. As for Elsie's score of two in the Composing Domain, several problems with her composing skills were evident. Her writing lacked a logically elaborated central point and demonstrated shifts in focus. As an example of a shift in focus, Elsie ended the first paragraph with the sentence, "The greatest

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hardships of homework are finding that extra time for family and the things I need to get done." The next paragraph started with the statement, "Now is the time of year for canning and picking the vegetables from the garden." She then dedicated the entire second paragraph to working in the garden. As I scored the paper, I had written that "no one idea emerges as central," which is consistent with a score of two on the Composing rubric.

Elsie had problems with sentence structure and run-ons. These skills are represented in the Usage/Mechanics Domain on the scoring rubrics. She wrote, "Our garden is located in our back yard behind our house it's medium size with plenty of good stuff to eat." Elsie also had trouble with choosing the wrong word and forms of words in her first essay: "rolls" instead of "rows" and "size" instead of "sized." Her writing exhibited words from the Appalachian dialect, "stuff" and "full ready." Additionally, Elsie had problems with bland language; "The beans are green and full ready to be picked and put into the freezer." There were problems with commas, mostly the lack of a needed comma: "Sometimes supper is a little late but we eat what I can get fixed."

Also in the Usage/Mechanics Domain, Elsie did not provide any transitions between paragraphs: at the end of the first paragraph, she had, "The greatest hardships of homework are finding that extra time for family and the things I need to get done." The next paragraph started with, "Now is the time for canning and picking the vegetables from the garden."

In the third domain, the Written Expression Domain, Elsie demonstrated some problems that were indicative of a score of two in this Domain. Her information in the essay was uneven. She was very descriptive when talking about the garden: "The tomatoes are hanging off the vines big red, and yellow ones waiting to be canned," but her description of her grandchildren was less descriptive; "It is hard to drop what I am doing for school and tend to the children," thus the unevenness represented by her essay. There was a lack of voice in Elsie's essay; it was

difficult to discern who was telling the story. Due to these problems with her writing scores on all three rubrics, Elsie's first essay received a total score of six.

Descriptive Essay

Students began doing exercises and practice writings to prepare for their descriptive essays. In preparation for all types of writing in the Developmental Writing 03 class, students worked on Learning Plus. During the first day of using Learning Plus in class, Elsie asked me for help in navigating through the program so she could get to the exercises (Fieldnotes, 9/13/00). She told me that she still had difficulty using the computer. During class on September 26th, Elsie contributed to the class by answering some of the grammar "problems" aloud (Fieldnotes).

As was the case throughout the semester when peer editing, Elsie worked with Angie on October 4th when they edited each other's descriptive papers (Fieldnotes). I believed that they always worked together because Elsie and Angie knew each other while they were working in the factory. They also always sat next to each other during class. During peer editing, Elsie told Angie how well she moved from one paragraph to the next (Fieldnotes, 10/4/00). Although Elsie was intuitively sensing transitions, I do not think she yet had a word for them in terms of writing.

On October 5, Elsie gave me a clean copy of her descriptive essay [530 words; 34 sentences; 15 words per sentence average] entitled, "My Aunt Bertha's House" (see Appendix M.4). On the same day that papers were handed in to Dr. Martin, I did the Primary Trait Scoring on Elsie's descriptive essay. Her scores on this essay, based on the rater and I using the three rubrics, are shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Elsie's Scores on Descriptive Essay

	Researcher's Scores	Rater's Scores
Composing Domain	4	4
Usage/Mechanics Domain	3	4
Written Expression Domain	3	3
Total Descriptive Essay	10	11

The rater and I scored Elsie's descriptive essay one point differently in the Usage/Mechanics Domain.

Elsie's writing in the Composing Domain was finely crafted and effective, resulting in a score of four. She started her essay with a strong, descriptive lead: "As I first approach my Aunt Bertha's house I see a beautiful green yard. Orange and yellow mums are growing out of old truck tires turned inside out. Stepping onto the porch I get a feeling of how people lived long ago." She made good use of spatial transitions that took the reader from the front yard to the inside of Aunt Bertha's house. Throughout her description of the house and yard, Elsie offered solid layers of elaboration: "Sitting against the wall is an old rocker that Aunt Bertha sits in to do her sewing. A large sewing basket sits in the floor with pieces of cloth lying around it." Also she worked well with presenting a consistent point of view throughout the essay.

Although Elsie had some problems in the Usage/Mechanics Domain, these errors did not distract from the richness of her essay. She demonstrated some of the problems that she also had in her first essay. She omitted commas or semicolons that would have helped with the flow of the essay: "There is no radio or television playing in the background only the birds singing from the trees." Elsie had a comma splice early in her essay: "Everything is so quiet and peaceful, I feel like I have stepped back in time." In the following run-on sentence, while omitting a needed semicolon, she also inserted a comma that was not necessary: "This picture was taken from an

airplane it shows the beauty of her home, and her flowers." All of her mechanical problems on this essay involved incorrect comma and punctuation usage.

For the Written Expression Domain, Elsie scored a three. Although she had a good grasp of this Domain in this essay, I did not rate her writing with a four since it was not strong enough to warrant a four. Her essay also represented a rhythmic flow. She had good control over her word choice and offered specific words in her description: "A large skillet is sitting on the burner filled with mustard greens that she has canned and a pan of cornbread that is ready to eat." There were a few places in her writing where Elsie offered vague descriptions that could have been more vivid: "Entering the living room I see pictures, and furniture that have been there for years".

Example Essay

On November 30th, Elsie gave me a clean copy of her example essay. I did the Primary Trait Scoring on Elsie's third essay, "My Husband George" [429 words; 25 sentences; 17 words per sentence average] (see Appendix M.5) on December 3rd. Her scores from the rater and meon each of the three domains are shown in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 Elsie's Score on Example Essay

	Researcher's Scores	Rater's Scores
Composing Domain	4	4
Usage/Mechanics Domain	3	3
Written Expression Domain	4	4
Total Example Essay	11	11

On Elsie's example essay, the rater and I assigned the same score in each of the three Domains.

In the Composing Domain, Elsie was strong in several of the areas that are indicative of a score of four. Her example essay had a strong lead: "I have been married to George for thirty-three years and know his habits well. His attitude towards things stays the same, day end, day out. George is known around our neighbors as a kind man who would do anything for you. However, I know the truth of his bad temper and lazy ways." She used key examples such as "If his supper is not cooked, and waiting for him when he arrives home from work, he bulls up and sits for hours without speaking" to represent his bad temper. Elsie also provided a dominant impression throughout her essay. In other words, her description and details left me as the reader with a clear picture of what she was describing.

Elsie's mistakes in the Usage/Mechanics Domain were not monumental. This third essay had run-on sentences: for example, "His bad temper shows when the telephone rings and you do not run to answer it, he will stomp the floor and ask 'what have you been doing, I guess that was an important call for me about timber, where were you at'." Elsie also had problems with comma splices in this paper, but not enough to take away from the meaning of the essay.

In the Written Expression Domain, I gave Elsie's paper a score of four. She demonstrated a consistent tone in her writing. She also made good word choices: "When family members come by, he will stomp off into the bedroom and sit until they leave. Then he will come out of the bedroom and start fussing about everything they have to say." Her choice of words gave a definite impression of her husband George. Her writing also exhibited good, strong description: "When the mud from his boots dries and falls off at night, he gives it a look and leaves it there on the floor." Elsie's third essay was filled with powerful images.

Post-Paper Interviews

Throughout her three post-paper interviews, Elsie often focused on the personal content of her papers instead of her writing process. For the first question, "What did you feel most confident about while writing this paper," Elsie talked about content during all three interviews. For her narrative essay, she told me that she was confident because what she was writing about was true. She did mention, however, that she felt good about her thesis statement. Dr. Martin had consistently focused on the thesis sentence during classroom instruction. On the interview about her descriptive essay, Elsie similarly told me she was confident "knowing everything I was writing." Then on the interview about her example paper, Elsie said she was confident writing "truthful stuff" and "something I know." Elsie also added some details about actual writing during her third interview. She told me she was "better at fragments this time" and also more confident "looking at subjects and verbs." Elsie continued to write about subjects with which she was comfortable and familiar, and she seemed to have a hard time talking about much more than her content.

In response to the second question, "What do you feel was your biggest challenge when writing this paper," Elsie was able to talk more about her writing than her content. For her narrative essay interview, she offered some big-picture type answers that looked at the writing process. She told me she was challenged when trying "to put it together" and "trying to explain," meaning providing details and organizing her essay. When Elsie talked about her descriptive essay, she admitted she was "not confident about fragments" and that it was hard to "hear them." Students were encouraged to read both their own papers and the papers they were peer-editing aloud, thus her reference to hearing fragments. Then on her final essay, the example paper, Elsie said she was challenged trying to put "all my thoughts into the paper without repeating them." She also confided, "I am more confident now…I enjoy it [writing] now." I

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was delighted that Elsie progressed to talk more about herself as a writer but instead continued to focus on the content of her essays.

For the third and final question in each of the interviews, "What did you focus on most while you were writing," Elsie did not make too much progress in talking about herself as a writer. On the interview about her narrative essay, Elise told me she focused on what it took to get her paper done and handed in on time. She said she focused "mostly about the time—the shortness of time" and for Elise this included finding time to write her paper. When we talked about her descriptive essay Elsie focused on the content of her paper. She told me that she centered on the "five senses" in her paper and also on "showing the house." On the last question in our last post-paper interview, Elsie again talked about her content. She told me how "everyday going and picking up messes" was what she had to describe about her husband. She said too that she focused on "facts and truth" and in her own words, this meant going "not off the wall" and providing some content for the reader to "relate to."

Final Exam/Comparison/Contrast Essay

On December 11th, students discussed pronoun usage (Fieldnotes). They practiced putting pronouns properly in sentences while doing exercises from the book. Dr. Martin called on Elsie to do a problem with subject and object pronouns, and Elsie got her problem wrong. Once she realized her error though, she corrected herself (Fieldnotes, 12/11/00). Elsie volunteered for another problem on pronouns from the review test and she got hers right this time. Elsie and the other students in the class got their graded in-class essay back from Dr. Martin on December 12th. They spent most of the class time correcting their essays. Elsie and

Angie discussed their essays. The remainder of the class time was spent talking about the final exam essay, the comparison and contrast essay.

When Elsie came to class for the final exam on December 15, she clearly was not feeling well. Her face was flushed and her eyes looked bloodshot. She told me that she thought she had the flu.

When I did the final Primary Trait Scoring on Elsie's final exam paper, the first thing that struck me was that she had handwritten her paper. On the out-of-class essays, she had always typed her papers, but on the essays done in class, she always hand wrote them. Elsie's writing on this comparison and contrast essay was difficult to read; I attributed this to the fact that she was not feeling well during the exam time.

From the list of topics that Dr. Martin gave the students, Elsie chose to write about the oral communication styles of girls and boys. Her Primary Trait Scores from the rater and me are shown in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4 Elsie's Scores on Final Exam (Comparison/Contrast) Essay

	Researcher's Scores	Rater's Scores
Composing Domain	3	3
Usage/Mechanics Domain	3	3
Written Expression Domain	2	2
Total Final Exam Essay	8	8

In her final exam paper, "Different Styles of Girls and Boys," [223 words; 19 sentences; 11 words per sentence average](see Appendix M.6) however, Elsie did not do as well in the Composing Domain as she had done on her third essay, as was to be expected on an essay which had to be written in a timed environment. She had difficulty focusing and used weak examples:

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"Girls seem to listen more than boys do. Boys seem like they are out in space sometimes and not hearing a word." There was no specific word choice or information. Her essay also demonstrated unevenness. Her thesis sentence, "As far back as elementary school girls and boys find differences in communication" was not supported clearly throughout the essay and lacked structural complexity.

Elsie's fourth essay had several places where commas were needed: "However girls like to talk about how pretty the car is." Like in her other essays, her errors with commas were reflected in her Usage/Mechanics Domain score. She also had some problems with using the wrong word: "themselfs" instead of "themselves"; and "alot" instead of "a lot."

She also demonstrated weaknesses in the Written Expression Domain. Her writing was imprecise, and the language was bland: "Boys seem like they are out in space sometimes and not hearing a word". Elsie's voice was not at all clear in her final essay. Additionally, awkward constructions made Elsie's essay's meaning unclear: "Boys enjoy talking to each other about sports and racecars. While girls find these subjects very boring. Who won a game, or how fast someone can drive, is what some boys like to talk about."

Exit Interview

After the exam was over, I met with Elsie to do our final interview of the semester. She told me that she was feeling terrible. She was attempting to fill out the answers to my questions as I went to sit with her.

The first exit interview question, "How do you feel your writing has most improved this semester," was answered briefly on Elsie's interview sheet. On her sheet, she had responded that she had improved in "making sense of what I am writing about." She also told me that she was not as nervous about writing.

For the second question, "What three things are you most confident about in your writing," Elsie had also written down some responses. This question was similar to the first question asked in the ongoing interviews. Her first response was that she is now "able to put stories together." Elsie's second point of confidence with her writing was "putting meaning into my writing." Her final answer was "making points about what I am writing about."

I then asked Elsie the third question: "What do you feel is still the hardest thing for you in your writing?" Elsie had written in response to question three that it was still hard for her "writing about subjects that aren't real to me." I detected that Elsie was still experiencing difficulties being comfortable with writing assignments that she felt did not affect her personally. Elsie's lack of comfort is evidenced by her responses in the interviews, the fieldnotes and also her score on the comparison/contrast essay, which had an assigned topic. She seemed to have difficulty seeing writing as an activity that was present in many different environments, not just in the personal writing as found in a narrative or descriptive essay. Elsie also told me she found it difficult to "try to keep it [her paper] organized." She said too that she was still concerned about avoiding fragments.

I could tell by the time that I asked Elsie the fourth question, "What do you now feel is the most important aspect (part) of writing," that she was really feeling ill. I asked her if she wanted to do the interview later and she said she would be okay. Elsie had only written on her paper in response to question four, "feelings, truthfulness." She said that for her "writing is easier" and that "we can learn through writing." By "easier," I think, based on my knowledge of Elsie's answers to other questions during interviews, that Elsie meant it was easier to write at the end of the semester than at the beginning of the semester. She told me too that an important aspect was "being able to put thoughts down, like journals."

For the fifth and final question, "Is there anything else you would like to tell me about you and your writing," Elsie had written a short note on her sheet. The comment read, "Just that I would like to improve in my structure." When I asked her what she meant by structure, Elsie said the grammar and the writing. She also told me, "I like writing on subjects I know. I know easier how to write on things I know."

Conclusion

Table 4.5 shows Elsie's writing scores on all three of the out-of-class revised essays and across domains.

Table 4.5 Elsie's Scores by Rubric on All Out-of-Class (Revised) Essays

Domains / **Essays**	*Narrative Essay*	*Descriptive Essay*	*Example Essay*
Composing	Researcher: 2 Rater: 2	Researcher: 4 Rater: 4	Researcher: 4 Rater: 4
Usage/Mechanics	Researcher: 2 Rater: 2	Researcher: 3 Rater: 4	Researcher: 3 Rater: 3
Written Expression	Researcher: 2 Rater: 2	Researcher: 3 Rater: 3	Researcher: 4 Rater: 4
Total Score	6, 6	10, 11	11, 11

Elsie's writing overall did improve over the course of the semester, but her writing indicated that she was still making many of the same usage and mechanics problems, such as comma placement and spelling errors. Additionally, in most of the Learning Plus modules, Elsie only passed with the minimum score.

As for Elsie's level of comfort with her skills as a writer, there was some indication that she had become more comfortable with her abilities as a writer. Her comments at the beginning

of the class demonstrated that she was very nervous at the beginning of the semester. By the end of the semester, based on her participation in class and also her responses to the interview questions, she did appear to be more comfortable with her writing skills and herself as a writer.

Strengths

Based on analyzing Elsie's in-class writing, her out-of-class revised essays, and her final exam essay, Elsie did demonstrate some strengths as a writer. She became very good at putting into practice what was learned during class time. For example, when she talked about focusing on thesis sentences for her narrative essay, this comment reflected a focus on classroom instruction during preparation for the narrative essay.

Gains in confidence as a writer also guided Elsie to become more comfortable with her writing. This confidence was reflected in both her interview answers and also in her increasing scores on the out-of-class revised essays. She even remarked in the Exit Interview that she was more comfortable writing.

Elsie improved in her writing usage and mechanics, although not substantially. She wrote more clearly with fewer errors toward the end of the semester, but she still made many errors in this Domain. By the end of the semester, Elsie was able to write her essays based on a clear thesis sentence. She also wrote, as the semester progressed, with added support for her thesis statements.

Additionally, Elsie demonstrated gains in her practice of writing as a process. She consistently took advantage of all opportunities during class time to do prewriting activities and to work on her drafts. I saw too that she made good use of her time during the peer editing processes and this practice was reflected in her revised writing. This improvement was also reflected in her increasing scores and competency in the Composing Domain.

Weaknesses

Even though Elsie made some improvement in her usage and mechanics writing skills, she still had a difficult time knowing when and where to use commas. Her writing was plagued with comma splices and an over usage of commas. Elsie's usage and mechanics difficulties were further demonstrated in her Learning Plus scores. Elsie's Learning Plus report showed that she also had difficulties receiving 80% on these areas of usage and mechanics. She made six attempts to pass the "Fragments Module," five to pass the "Run-ons and Comma Splices" module, and made an overall score of 73% on all the modules.

Elsie had a difficult time using academic language and in keeping slang and dialect out of her writing. She often wrote just as she spoke and did not catch these errors as she worked on editing and revision. Her errors with dialect reflected those of the Appalachian dialect.

Since the Expectations of Employers sheet contained a point about using a computer to compose essays, it is important to mention Elsie's absence of computer skills. The lack of computer skills that Elsie demonstrated also hindered her writing, particularly when she had to handwrite essays in class. She never mentioned taking any introductory computer classes during her first semester, but when I saw her the next semester, she was enrolled in a computer skills class. Although this skill will not make her writing that much better, Elsie will need to know how to use the computer in her future classes and her workplace.

Finally, Elsie's continued reference to her content and comfort with writing that was personal may affect the transfer of writing skills into writing that is not personally oriented. I believe that once she recognizes that she can use her improving writing skills for other writing tasks, she will make the transfer successfully.

Epilogue

When I talked to Elsie the following semester, she told me that she was taking English 111 (Freshman English for credit). She said that she tried to use all of the techniques that she learned in Dr. Martin's class and also that she still used the Langan textbook. She told me that she was doing well in her new English class.

Lauren's Case Study

Lauren, a TRA student in her early forties, came to Creekview Community College for retraining because her sewing job at a local garment factory ended when the factory closed down in May of 2000. She looks younger than forty, wears her hair in a short, becoming blonde bob, and always dresses very neatly. She lives on a farm in a rural area of Appalachia with her husband. They raise beef cattle at their farm and it provides the main part of their income. She and her husband have one child.

A native of the area, Lauren worked in two different garment factories at different times---one for four years and one for four and a half years. Her job at the garment factory had been cutting cloth. She came to the community college to be retrained as an employee in human services and plans to stay in the same region and look for a job nearby to her family farm.

Lauren tested into the 03 class with a raw score of 21 on the APT, a pen and paper placement test. She told me later in the semester that she had wanted to take the computerized placement test (ASSET), but the computers were down on the day she sat for her test.

In-Class Writing

The first few days of school were very nervous times for Lauren; she did not talk much and focused solely on taking notes on everything Dr. Martin said. When Dr. Martin asked the

class on August 22nd to raise their hands if they had computer experience, Lauren was one of the two TRA students who raised their hands (Fieldnotes). She told me later that she had gotten a computer at home so she could do her homework there. Lauren told me on August 23rd that she had already been to the writing lab at the college (Fieldnotes). When Dr. Martin told the class about the writing lab later in the week and asked if anyone had been there, Lauren was the only one in the entire class who raised her hand.

Lauren wrote her first in-class essay [191 words; 13 sentences; 14 words per sentence average] on August 21, 2000, the first day of class. Her untitled essay was about her home on a farm (see Appendix N.1). She handwrote her first in-class essay.

Lauren's final in-class essay [389 words; 23 sentences; 17 words per sentence average], "Marriage," was written on December 5, 2000 (see Appendix N.2). She chose to write on the topic, "Americans tend to get married later in life than they used to." She told me before she began writing that she gets very nervous when doing in-class essays (Fieldnotes, 12/5/00). When she started writing, Lauren sighed, shook her head, and rolled her eyes. She looked at me and said, "I'm stuck." She also talked to Danene while writing her essay, and Dr. Martin had to remind the students that this was a testing-type of atmosphere (Fieldnotes, 12/5/00). Lauren typed this final in-class essay.

When the raters were given Lauren's essays (Student Three) marked A and B instead of first and last essay, they chose her later essay as the better of the two. After the Forced Choice Selection, I conducted a further analysis of Lauren's two essays, using the Ten Expectations of Employers sheet.

Lauren's essays that were used for the Forced Choice Selection were quite different. Just in terms of length, when typed, her "Beginning Paper" was one-half page and the "End Paper"

was almost two pages. The length was reflective of the amount of detail that she provided in her last essay.

Lauren's first essay had no evidence of a writing process; there were no transitions between her paragraphs and no order to the essay. For example, the second paragraph ended with the sentence, "We have several other animals including a dog, donkey, & cats for pets." The following paragraph began with the sentence, "When we moved to the farm, the only building that was already on the farm was an old barn."

Lauren's beginning essay had no title and no clear thesis sentence. The closest thing to a thesis sentence was "My home on the farm is located on top of hill and our farm is all around the house." This sentence seemed to be the thesis since she talked about living on a farm several times. There was a lack of support for her ideas and possible thesis sentence because she covered many different topics in her essay. It is difficult to identify the level of support based on this absence of a clear thesis. Furthermore, her essay demonstrated a lack of adequate details: for example, "We moved to the farm about ten years ago." She never elaborated on this statement and like other sentences in her essay, just made a brief mention of something and never gave any details.

Lauren's first essay was also full of short, choppy sentences: "We raise beef cattle for a living." The essay lacked any sophisticated content: "It is a place to go so you can think and relax." It did appear that she wrote an essay based solely on her own perspective, a writer-based essay.

Her use of grammar and mechanics was not bad, however, although there were a few errors. Her usage of good grammar and mechanics could be due to the simple sentence structures evident in her essay and the brevity: "You can find peace and quite [sic] there." It may also be due to the fact that Lauren's first essay was very short.

Her grammatical and mechanical problems were minor in her first essay; she used the wrong word, "quite" instead of "quiet." Also her essay had one shift in voice from first person to second person, you: "You can find peace and quite there. It is a place to go to so you can think and relax." Lauren also wrote "county" instead of "country" when describing her house on the farm. I think that Lauren would have caught these minor mistakes if she had edited her paper before handing it in to Dr. Martin. The paper also was not word processed, but instead done by hand.

Lauren's ending essay, "Marriage," there was organized; it flowed nicely and had an evident plan. The essay was organized from the very general, "Getting married today at a young age is not a norm thing to do" in her first paragraph, to the very specific, "My view comes from my mother, who was born when her mother was forty-eight years old" in her last paragraph.

The ideas in her paper were succinct and clear: "At a certain age most people mature and can handle problems in the marriage calmer and with a certain degree of common sense." Her thesis statement was clearly written as the last sentence in the first paragraph: "Getting married at an older age has some good qualities; but it can also have some bad ones to."

Lauren offered general support for her thesis; for instance, "how money problems are not as bad if you wait to marry," and "if you wait you would have had a chance to travel." She then moved onto more specific, personal support toward the end of the paper: "All my mother can remember about her mother was that she was always an old person." Also her essay shifted from second person voice to first person voice. Her writing had few short, choppy sentences and had a variety of lengths. For instance, within her third paragraph, Lauren wrote, "Plans can be made about when a couple would like to start a family, but this plan does not always work"; "Children do not always arrive at the time they have been planned for." These sentences demonstrate a variety of lengths and complexity within the same paragraph.

The content in Lauren's final essay, although not highly sophisticated, was more sophisticated than in her beginning essay. There was evidence of editing, since the paper had few grammatical and mechanical problems. She used a semi-colon instead of a comma once, incorrectly used "too" instead of "to," and had a problem with word order: "Starting and raising a family later in life can be a downfall to a later in life marriage." Lauren also chose to write her ending essay on the computer, although she used pen and paper in the draft process during class. Based on this analysis of both of Lauren's in-class papers, it was evident why all three raters chose the end paper as the better of the two.

Out-of-Class Essays/Revised Writing

Narrative Essay

Once her initial nervousness passed, Lauren became an active member of the Developmental Writing 03 early in the semester. She frequently volunteered to answer grammatical problems from the textbook and offered her opinions on issues discussed in class.

In the row of computers and chairs where all four of the TRA students sat, Lauren sat in the last seat closest to the door. I usually sat in a chair situated between Lauren and the door, and Lauren would often lean over to me to express her thoughts about the classroom discussion. For instance, one day early in the semester, when the class was talking about where to place thesis statements in an essay, Dr. Martin read an introductory paragraph without direction or a thesis statement. Lauren leaned over and asked me, "Kind of gets boring, doesn't it," referring to the absence of direction in the essay (Fieldnotes, 8/29/00). Further, on August 31st, during another discussion of thesis statements, Lauren commented that the sentence was more of an

announcement than a thesis statement. She also contributed more than any other student in the class during this discussion (Fieldnotes, 8/31/00).

When students wrote their thesis statements for their narrative essay on the board, for a discussion with the class, Lauren was the first to write hers (Fieldnotes, 9/1/00). She wrote, "As a child going to Sunday church services was pure torture" (Fieldnotes, 9/1/00). On September 8th, as students worked on their first peer editing, Lauren worked with Danene, as she did for the rest of the semester. They did not know each other before this class but had been sitting beside each other since the first day of class. Lauren read Danene's paper aloud and used a dictionary as a tool as she read (Fieldnotes, 9/8/00). Lauren handed in her essay to Dr. Martin on the following day. Dr. Martin gave me an unmarked copy of Lauren's narrative essay to use for the Primary Trait Scoring and as a resource during my later interview with Lauren.

The day after the narrative essay was handed in, I conducted the Primary Trait Scoring on Lauren's and the other TRA students' essays. Lauren's scores, based on the rater's and my Primary Trait Scoring, in each of the three domains—Composing, Usage/Mechanics and Written Expression—are represented in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6 Lauren's Scores on Narrative Essay

	Researcher's Scores	Rater's Scores
Composing Domain	4	3
Usage/Mechanics Domain	3	4
Written Expression Domain	4	4
Total Narrative Essay	11	11

The rater and I varied in our scoring of both the Composing and Usage/Mechanics Domain by one point. Lauren scored a four on the Composing Domain for her first out-of-class

revised essay [474 words; 28 sentences; 17 words per sentence average], "Torture." In the Composing Domain for Lauren's first essay, (see Appendix N.3) I noted that her "organizational plan is good." She told the story of going to church in great detail, moving from the ride in her father's car to church, the church activities during the service, and then the drive home.

Lauren also provided excellent details of the events surrounding her "torture": "Getting ready meant giving up my soft blue jeans, ponytail holders, and dirty tennis shoes for a stiff, starched dress." The details in her essay were also poignant: "I would see several people sitting with their eyes closed and their heads bobbing up and down. They reminded me of those dogs people place in the back windshield of their cars; as they drive along, the heads of these dogs bob up and down." This example also shows how she made good use of metaphors in her description. Her writing created a vivid picture: "When we pulled into the driveway, I knew that my torture that week was over. I could take that terrible dress off, put on my old clothes and tennis shoes, the remaining of the lazy Sunday afternoon was mine."

The Usage/Mechanics Domain posed some problems for Lauren in her writing. Lauren's first essay had problems with word choice, "setting" instead of "sitting" and "remaining" instead of "remainder"; shifts in verb tense, "sung" instead of "were sung" and "wonder" instead of "wondered." Her essay also had several comma splices, "I usually begged my father to let me sit in the front seat going home, I could play my game of counting houses on the street." Her essay demonstrated some minor problems with end punctuation: "Sometimes I wonder if he actually thought he could run the devil right out of the church?" None of her usage and mechanical mistakes, however, distracted from clearly understanding her essay.

In the Written Expression Domain, Lauren had a purposefully crafted message that worked well from her thesis statement: "As a child, going to Sunday Church Services was like torture." Her essay continued with specific word choice such as, "I was hot, mad and sticky

from the starched dress I was wearing" and "It was impossible for me to move them [her legs] around because the flesh would stick to the wood and it was not easy to peel them off." Lauren's narrative essay also demonstrated a purposeful tone, one that led me as the reader to understand the humor in her Sunday visits to church. With Lauren's essay demonstrating many of the traits of a successful piece of narrative writing, her final score on this essay was an eleven.

Descriptive Essay

As the classroom discussion turned to preparing for the descriptive essay, Lauren continued to contribute to discussions and textbook exercises on a regular basis. On September 22nd, the class looked at essays that provided inadequate description (Fieldnotes). Lauren called out the answer to one of the problems and said it was "underdeveloped" (Fieldnotes, 9/22/00). Lauren also became more humorous in her classroom contributions; for instance, when she responded to Dr. Martin's question about professions that were famous for wordiness, Lauren called out, "Lawyers!" (Fieldnotes, 9/26/00). When students read their descriptive essay drafts from the bottom to the top, that is, in reverse order, so as to find fragments, Lauren finished before the other TRA students (Fieldnotes, 10/4/00).

On October 5th, when Lauren handed in her descriptive essay to Dr. Martin, she also printed a copy from her computer disk for me. I did the Primary Trait Scoring for Lauren's essay on the following day. The scores from the rater and me are shown in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7 Lauren's Scores on Descriptive Essay

	Researcher's Scores	Rater's Scores
Composing Domain	4	4
Usage/Mechanics Domain	2	2
Written Expression Domain	4	4
Total Descriptive Essay	10	10

The rater and I assigned the same score in all Domains to Lauren's essay. Lauren's descriptive essay [383 words; 26 sentences; 14 words per sentence average], "Lost Memories" (see Appendix N.4) was strong in the Composing Domain. Her essay presented a dominant impression of an old house Lauren saw on her way to school. Her thesis statement helped to create this dominant impression: "Even though it's an old and deserted house, it still has beauty."

Also in the Composing Domain, Lauren's descriptive essay offered layers of elaboration while it moved the reader from the yard to the house: "The fence is now broken and crippled with sharp spikes of uneven wooden rails. There is honeysuckle vine growing in and out of the fence. The orange and yellow blossoms have a sweet and warm smell of summer." She offered key examples and illustrations: "The wooden siding of the house is bowed from the weather; it has crustations [sic] of black mold that rubs off onto my hand like black shoe polish."

Lauren's descriptive essay had more problems in the Usage/Mechanics Domain than her narrative essay. Her spelling was poor; "slinder" instead of "slender," "hugh," instead of "huge," and "icecicles" instead of "icicles." There were also several problems with verb use and tense agreement: "These are just my memories, the old house has it's memories hid within it old walls." In this same sentence, she misused the possessive form of "its" twice.

Lauren's essay had multiple problems with comma use. She used a semicolon instead of a comma: "Each morning as I drive to school; I am drawn to turn and look at something that most people would think was ugly." Most of her problems were with a similar overuse of semicolons where she should have used commas. She also had several comma splices: for example, "The yard has apple trees that are old and twisted from age, they have small bunches of yellow spotted apples hanging on the branches."

Once again, Lauren did well in the Written Expression Domain. Her use of vivid description was well-controlled: "The fence is now broken and crippled with sharp spikes of uneven wooden rails" and "The windowpanes have been shattered into narrow strips of glass that hang like icecicles [sic]." She effectively used metaphors and similes: "A grapevine that is many years old, winds around a broken trellis like a mass of cold spaghetti noodles." Even with the grammatical and mechanical errors, Lauren's essay still flowed well and provided a vivid description.

Example Essay

The day after the descriptive essays were due, students did Learning Plus. Lauren quietly worked on her modules (Fieldnotes, 10/6/00). On October 18th, the class discussed an essay they had read for homework and how it could generate topics for their example essay (Fieldnotes). A possible topic was "Advice parents gave you when you were younger that you accepted or not" and Lauren called out, "They don't ever stop!" (Fieldnotes, 10/18/00).

On peer-editing day, Lauren and Danene again read each other's essays. Lauren leaned over to tell me that when I am a teacher, "don't put students' papers on the overhead. It's like having a verbal test." I asked her if she dislikes this activity even when the paper represented

good qualities. She answered, "It's too open and embarrassing" (Fieldnotes, 11/15/00). Lauren read another student's paper when she finished editing Danene's paper.

Since I was not at the college on the day the students handed in their papers to Dr. Martin, Dr. Martin made a clean copy of Lauren's example essay for me. The results of the Primary Trait Scoring from the rater and me on Lauren's essay are shown in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8 Lauren's Scores on Example Essay

	Researcher's Scores	Rater's Scores
Composing Domain	3	3
Usage/Mechanics Domain	3	3
Written Expression Domain	4	4
Total Example Essay	10	10

The rater and I gave Lauren the same scores on her essay in each of the Domains. In Lauren's third essay [395 words; 28 sentences; 14 words per sentence average], "To Know Elizabeth," (see Appendix N.5), she did well in the Composing Domain. She offered a clear central idea in her thesis statement: "Sometimes, I think fate does come our way, for meeting Elizabeth gave me something in life that I had never known before." There were key examples to support her thesis: "Each plant was nurtured with her love and care, as if she was raising children. Spending time with Elizabeth and her plants, gave me the art of patience, and the knowledge of how unimportant things in life can be great."

Her writing had a few good transitions between the paragraphs. For example, after her thesis sentence, she started the next paragraph with, "As Elizabeth and I became friends, we realized that age didn't make a difference between us." She did not have a transition between her second and third paragraph, however. The second paragraph ended with, "I was taught

to[sic] to laugh at myself, and cry for others" and the third started with, "We spent many hours weeding her flowers in the garden."

Although Lauren's score in the Usage/Mechanics Domain improved from her descriptive essay, she still had quite a few problems in her writing. She put commas in her writing that were not necessary: "I didn't realize that after becoming an adult, that I could find the grandmother I had never know before." Her writing had one comma splice: "I liked to watch her jump around the kitchen, she seemed like a playful kitten not knowing what to get into next." Also she omitted a comma when she needed one: "These smells made her clean sparkling kitchen seem like she could have been Mrs. Santa Claus." In her sentence about finding a grandmother, she used the wrong verb tense, "know" instead of "known." Lauren had several problems with using the wrong word; she used "to" instead of "too" and "loosing" instead of "losing." She also had some problems with spelling: "curtians" instead of "curtains"; and "remineded" instead of "reminded."

Lauren's writing demonstrated good control over the Written Expression Domain. She used precise language and vocabulary: "Her kitchen was decorated in the 1950's era. It had many sets of salt and pepper shakers, a red checked table cloth on the table, and crisp ruffled curtians at the windows." Lauren also made good use of metaphors in her essay: "The colorful patches of flowers remineded [sic] me of a box of crayolas melted together by the hot sultry sun, with swirls of colors mixing together like alphabet soup." She described Elizabeth's kitchen using words that played on the reader's senses: "The aroma reminded me of Christmas. The smell of vanilla and walnut was warm and inviting." She had what the Written Expression Domain rubric description referred to as "a purposefully crafted message." In the case of Lauren's example essay, this purposefully crafted message was the description of both how Elizabeth impacted her life and how Elizabeth lived.

Post-Paper Interviews

Lauren focused on her writing and herself as a writer early on in the post-paper interviews. For the first question in each of the interviews, "What did you feel most confident about while writing this paper," Lauren almost always focused on her writing. For her narrative essay, she told me that she was confident because her story was true, but then shifted her focus on her content to tell me more about her writing. She said, "I knew a lot. Punctuation was a thing I was down on…As a writer, I know I'm not well into it yet. It's been a long time since I've written." Then on the descriptive essay, Lauren told me of her growing confidence in "how to word a sentence, with a subject and a verb." She told me too that she had more confidence "in making the paper longer." Finally, on her example essay interview, Lauren told me that she knew better how to put sentences together.

The second interview question that I asked at each post-paper interview was about what Lauren was most challenged by while writing her papers. When we talked about the narrative essay, Lauren talked to me about the process of doing drafts and prewriting. She said her biggest challenge was "not knowing how to set out what I want to say." For her, it was also a challenge "not being in school for so long…don't use it [writing] in everyday life." Then when we talked about her descriptive essay, Lauren focused more on the content than the writing process. She said she had a harder time "deciding what I wanted to say; I had to sit and think about it." On her example essay interview, Lauren told me she was challenged by the description required. She said, "description. Get full description. See what I'm saying."

For the third interview question, Lauren continued to offer insight to her thinking as a writer. She told me at each interview what she focused on while she was writing. During the narrative essay interview, Lauren told me that she focused on using a lot of description. She summarized by saying she was "not just using details, but description." Then when we talked

about her descriptive essay, Lauren said she focused once again on the descriptive element. She told me in particular, for her writing involved, "detailing it, trying to describe things, and the five senses." In her response to her final out-of-class revised essay, Lauren talked to me about her content. She said she wanted to "tell how I really felt about her. I know'd [sic] her really well."

Final Exam Comparison/Contrast Essay

Students prepared for their in-class and comparison/contrast essays by doing practice exercises in their book on December 1st; Lauren contributed to the discussion on every example (Fieldnotes). When the example was "effects of more mothers in the workforce," Lauren added, "can contribute to crime" and "parents may be more educated and help children more" (Fieldnotes, 12/1/00). Lauren told the class, "I think it's hard to separate them [cause and effect]. You'd have to have some kind of opinion for which you'd need a cause, right?" (Fieldnotes, 12/1/00)

On December 7th, students practiced doing comparison and contrast examples from the textbook; Lauren was the first to contribute to the discussion. She wondered about comparing two extremes when they compared the Chalet vs. MacDonald's and asked if it "may be better to compare Golden Corral and MacDonald's" (Fieldnotes, 12/7/00). On December 11th, when students did some exercises on pronoun usage from the text, Lauren answered several problems and got all of hers right (Fieldnotes).

Dr. Martin made me a copy of Lauren's final exam essay on the day it was written, December 15th. The results of the rater's and my Primary Trait Scoring are in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9 Lauren's Scores on Final Exam (Comparison/Contrast) Essay

	Researcher's Scores	Rater's Scores
Composing Domain	4	4
Usage/Mechanics Domain	4	4
Written Expression Domain	4	4
Total Final Exam Essay	12	12

The rater and I assigned the same scores in all Domains for Lauren's essay. In Lauren's comparison and contrast essay, "Wearing Two Hats,"[375 words; 26 sentences; 14 words per sentence average] (see Appendix N.6), she told about two friends who were very different; "Brenda has never had a public job and has never experienced money problems. Tammy is a single mother who has worked in sewing factories most of her life." She worked well with the comparison/contrast rhetorical mode.

For the Composing Domain, in which she scored a four, she worked well from her key idea, the thesis sentence: "I find in each one of them something that I like and can relate to." She offered support about both of her friends and their differences. Her essay also had layers of elaboration, guiding the reader to know the two women, Tammy and Brenda, better. For example, "Brenda and I go shopping at the malls and the more expensive stores" and "Tammy and I go shopping at all the discount stores, we hit all the sales and we are usually standing in line the day after Thanksgiving waiting for the Walmart specials." Lauren's comparison essay also showed an evident organizational plan as her paragraphs flow well and she moves back and forth from the comparison of one woman to the other.

Lauren showed great improvement in the Usage/Mechanics Domain, although she still had some minor errors with commas. These errors were not enough to distract from her writing, however. She had some comma splices: for example, "Tammy is quite and is hard to get to

know, she seems not to trust many people." Lauren added a comma that was not necessary: "Even though, neither friend has met the other, I don't thing that they would ever be friends." There were several problems with using the wrong word: "quite" instead of "quiet"; "thing" instead of "think"; and "loose" instead of "lose." The only other grammatical problem was when she described Brenda as a "small frame person" instead of "small framed." She had made great improvement in the Usage/Mechanics Domain.

For the Written Expression Domain, Lauren continued to do well. She offered precise information about her friends Brenda and Tammy. She chose specific words to describe her relationship with her friends: "Being friends with two women who have different backgrounds can make good friendships. I can find common ground with both of them and we have a lot of fun together. I have learned to wear different hats when we are together." Her essay also flowed well as she moved from the things that she and Brenda do together, to those things that she does with Tammy; these activities are comparable but still a little different. Lauren did a good job of comparing the two women as friends.

Exit Interview

Lauren and I met for her exit interview after she had finished another exam and before she wrote her exam essay for Developmental Writing 03. I asked her the first question, "how do you feel your writing has most improved this semester?" She had written down responses to the exit interview questions on her sheet. She said she had learned to stop thinking, "is this wrong?" She explained to me that she would not scrutinize her own writing so much that she could not proceed. Lauren also wrote on her sheet that she had "improved on sentence structure and to have a complete sentence." She told me too that she could now "write more freely." Writing

more freely for Lauren tied back into not thinking, "is this wrong," so that now she could just write everything she was thinking down and then go back to make editorial corrections.

For the second question, "What three things are you most confident about in your writing," Lauren had also written some responses. She had written down three points, and she added some comments during the interview. Her first point was "being able to understand sentence structure better." Lauren wrote for number two, "to be more descriptive." Her third answer was "to not fear writing as before." She added in her comments to me that she was more comfortable with writing now. Lauren provided further evidence, based on this interview and her other three interviews, that her comfort level with herself as a writer was increasing. She was also comfortable talking to me both about herself as a writer and her writing.

I asked next what Lauren felt was still the hardest thing for her in her writing. An emerging concern that was not addressed in previous interviews with Lauren was the topic of where the writing was to occur—in-class, out-of-class—and the time restraints for composing an essay. She wrote that it was still the hardest for her "to write in the classroom. I feel I need more time to make it better than class periods." This comment was in direct connection to assignments that were written during class time as opposed to those that the students could prepare at home and elsewhere. Lauren said that she still found it hard with the "like" process. When I asked her what she meant by this, she said she meant, "rewriting until I like it."

"What do you now feel is the most important aspect (part) of writing" was the fourth exit interview question that I asked Lauren. Lauren had also written some responses for question four. She wrote that she considered the most important aspect of writing "to be clear on what I want to say." She also wrote that it was also important "to not be afraid." She told me that she believes, "the more you do it [writing], the better you get."

Finally I asked Lauren if there was anything else she wanted to tell me about herself or about her writing. Lauren showed me what she had on her sheet and had only two things written on it for the fifth question: "1st semester was hard to get use [sic] to" and "good teacher." She did not have anything to add.

Conclusion

Table 4.10 shows Lauren's writing scores on all three of the out-of-class revised essays and across domains.

Table 4. 10 Lauren's Scores by Rubric on All Out-of-Class (Revised) Essays

Domains / **Essays**	*Narrative Essay*	*Descriptive Essay*	*Example Essay*
Composing	Researcher: 4 Rater: 3	Researcher: 4 Rater: 4	Researcher: 3 Rater: 3
Usage/Mechanics	Researcher: 3 Rater: 4	Researcher: 2 Rater: 2	Researcher: 3 Rater: 3
Written Expression	Researcher: 4 Rater: 4	Researcher: 4 Rater: 4	Researcher: 4 Rater: 4
Total Score	11, 11	10, 10	10, 10

Lauren's highest scores came on her first out-of-class revised essay, the narrative essay. The narrative essay is often the first writing assignment in developmental writing classes because it gives students to write on topics that they choose. Further, narrative writing is a style of writing that allows students more freedom to express their thoughts and opinions on a topic, and allows them to tell the story in their language (writer-based prose). Although she did the best on this essay out of the three out-of-class revised essays, her scores in the Composing Domain and the Written Expression Domain remained high. It is important to mention too that Lauren wrote an extremely well-done comparison/contrast essay for her final exam.

From the beginning of the semester, Lauren appeared to be comfortable with herself as a writer. She contributed in class to discussions about writing and she was very at ease talking with me about writing during our interviews.

Strengths

Lauren had several strengths as a writer, which developed even further after participating in the Developmental Writing 03 class. She did very well throughout the semester in the Composing Domain, even on her first out-of-class paper. Lauren used vivid language for describing people and objects to the point of making them very real for her readers. Her writing almost always demonstrated a unity based on her thesis statement and all of the supporting details. This strength also reflected that Lauren had composed her papers using writing process. It was also evident that during class when she had time to compose drafts, she used her time wisely.

Lauren also made improvement in the Usage/Mechanics Domain of her essays. She still had some problems with understanding when and when not to use commas, but she made progress in placing them correctly in her writing. She had to do some of the Learning Plus modules a few times before she achieved success, but her scores showed that she worked for many days on the "Run-ons and Comma Splices", the "Parallel Structure", and the "Verbs" modules. Her final exam paper contained fewer comma splices and other comma errors than her previous papers; thus, I consider her improvement in comma use a strength.

Perhaps one of Lauren's greatest strengths was her writing skills in the Written Expression Domain. In all of her essays, her writing demonstrated a consistent tone. She also used figurative language, like metaphors, very well in her essays. She was able to make

something seemingly ordinary appear vivid through her writing. Lauren additionally had a way of writing about people and objects in such a way that I as a reader could remember them.

Other strengths of Lauren's writing were clarity, sentence variety, and content. Lauren's essays were always organized in such a way that her ideas were succinct and clear. She used a variety of sentences, in length and complexity, in all but her first in-class essay. Finally, Lauren chose to write about topics that she had obviously thought about at length before she sat down to write.

Weaknesses

There are not many weaknesses to point out in Lauren's writing by the end of the semester. However, most of her weaknesses would fall in the Usage/Mechanics Domain. Lauren still had a few problems with confusing words, but she had improved in this skill by the end of the semester. She also had problems with spelling and choosing the right word, which may have been caused by problems understanding the word processing program she was using, since most of them have spell-check. I could tell that she had done some of her essays on either a typewriter or an old word processor, so this may explain her spelling errors.

Epilogue

When I spoke to Lauren the following semester, we spoke over the phone. She said that she is really enjoying her new English class (Freshman English) and that she had done well on her papers. She said that she had been by a few times to see Dr. Martin and ask her some questions about her writing. Most of all, she said that she was surprised that she liked writing so much and that she felt comfortable writing academic papers.

Angie's Case Study

Angie, who is in her mid thirties, came to Creekview Community College after the garment factory she worked at closed. She worked there for eight years, and for five of those years, she had perfect attendance. As a garment worker, Angie had worked at two garment factories, one for seven years as a machine operator, and the other for eight years as a supervisor. Angie worked at the last garment factory with Elsie and Danene.

A full-sized woman with shoulder length, permed hair in the back, Angie is a single mother who has never been married. She is raising her five-year-old daughter with the help of her family and occasional visits from her daughter's father. She told me often that her daughter is the center of her world.

One of the most notable traits that Angie has is her ability to tell stories. She always had a crowd of people around her, both young and old, and also enjoyed telling me stories about her life and school. Although Angie was originally from the Appalachian region, she moved around some as a child because her father was in the military. When her family returned to Appalachia during her early teen years, they all stayed, except for a sister who works in Northern Virginia. Angie plans to stay in the area and seek work when she completes her degree.

Angie also tested into Developmental Writing 03 and scored a 61 on the Compass Placement Test. Angie plans to be retrained to work in the field of early childhood education, and she mentioned that she may even go for a four-year degree so that she can become a teacher.

In-Class Writing

Angie wrote her first in-class essay on August 21, 2000, the first day of class. For the first in-class essay [238 words; 14 sentences; 17 words per sentence average], Angie hand wrote her untitled essay about her daughter and how she changed Angie's life (see Appendix O.1).

For the last in-class essay [370 words; 14 sentences; 26 words per sentence average] that Angie wrote on December 5, 2000, she chose her topic from a list Dr. Martin provided. Angie chose option one on the choice sheet: "Having more mothers in the workforce has changed the way many kids grow up." Her essay was entitled, "What is more important money or children" (see Appendix O.2).

Both of Angie's in-class essays were given to the raters for the Forced Choice Selection. When the raters were given the essays marked A and B, one representing Angie's (named simply "Student Four" on the papers) first in-class essay and the other representing her final in-class essay, two of the raters chose Angie's last essay and one chose her first essay as better.

Once the raters had made their choices, I further analyzed Angie's essays using the Ten Writing Expectations of Employers (see Appendix C) sheet. As I further analyzed Angie's two essays, I looked to see if I could determine why one of the raters chose her first one as the better of the two.

For Angie's essays, there was some evidence of improvement from the beginning paper to the end paper. The essay was organized in a logical, chronological order as she told the story of her daughter's birth, including Angie's first visit to the doctor when she discovered she was pregnant to when her daughter joined Angie's life. The first essay was also written clearly. Angie's thesis statement, which is also her first paragraph, was "I walked into my english [sic]

class today, and I am given the chance first thing to write about the best thing that ever happened to me, [full name withheld]."

Angie offered support to further explain why her daughter was the best thing that had ever happened to her. For example, "After going to the doctor visit for the first time, and hearing the baby's heartbeat, I knew then, my life would never be the same." Angie also used a variety of sentence lengths, as was evidenced in her thesis. Another example is "But finially [sic], on April 10, 1995 at 4:38pm, my mircle [sic] came into this world weighing 8 lbs. 15 ½ oz, and she was 20 ¾ inches long." The content in Angie's first essay did not show sophisticated content or serious thought. She wrote instead an emotional testimonial of her experience: "I came out of that office with every emotion in the world going through my mind. But I knew somehow, that heartbeat and I would make it." There was some evidence of editing on the handwritten draft, as some things were crossed out and corrected.

Her grammatical and mechanical errors were with commas and spelling. She overused commas: "She is the best part of me, and there isn't a day that goes by, that I don't stop and thank God for my daughter." Her spelling errors were numerous, especially for such a short essay. For example, she used "finially" instead of "finally"; "beleife" instead of "belief"; and "mircle" instead of "miracle." She may have caught these spelling errors if she had used the computer to type her paper. She also made an incorrect word choice by choosing "loosing" instead of "losing."

Angie's final in-class essay tended to ramble and skip around, unlike her later formal essays. There was no clear logical order and the paper repeated the same ideas: "Some mothers want to work to give their children all the material things in this world that they can" and then at the beginning of a paragraph two paragraphs later, "Some mothers may want to work so their

children can have expensive labels on their clothes but in some cases mothers work so their children can have groceries in the house."

Where Angie usually put her thesis statement in other papers, at the end of the first paragraph, she wrote, "It is much easier to point out some children will feel more abandoned and that mom does not have enough time for them, even if the job their mother has outside their home puts expensive shoes on their feet, gives them new video games to play, or puts food on the table." Neither this rambling statement, nor any statement in the first paragraph, represented a clear thesis. There was also no support for her thesis.

She did, however, offer a wide variety of sentence lengths and types: "When the mother does arrive, tired from her own day at work she rusher to get supper fixed, clean the house, and do the laundry," and then later on in the same paragraph, "Finally, it is time for a bath and bedtime." Her content was not sophisticated and this lack of sophistication may have meant that Angie had chosen a topic with which she was either not comfortable or too familiar. This choice of topic meant that she had a hard time writing clearly about the topic she chose. For example, "It may be ok with some mothers that many children come home to an empty house after school to await mommy's arrival form work."

There were a few grammatical problems in Angie's ending essay. She did write this final essay on the computer, so there were not major spelling errors. She shifted verb tense from present to past in the third paragraph, "After the meal she does the dishes then tried hurriedly to help the child with homework." She had quite a few problems with commas, mostly the omission of commas when they were necessary, as in the above sentence.

The main problems in Angie's end essay existed in her content and voice. Her first essay had a much stronger voice and consistent use of this voice. The first essay was a narrative essay, a form of writer-based prose and which is traditionally an easier form of writing for

developmental students. The end essay contained a "you" use of voice and in its content, almost presented itself as a lecture instead of an essay, although Angie changed partially into first person. Perhaps, by trying to distance herself from her writing in her ending essay, Angie found the form of writing, a more reader-based prose, more difficult than the narrative writing of her first essay. These discrepancies in the end essay, as well as the distance present in the end essay, may have affected the rater's choices and thus why one rater chose the beginning essay as better than the ending essay.

Out-of-Class Essays/ Revised Writing

Narrative Essay

On the day that the classroom talk revolved around thesis statements for the narrative essay, I noticed that Angie looked very tired. I asked her if she was okay and she told me she was worried about her daughter. Her daughter had just started kindergarten and did not like being away from Angie during the day. Angie told me that on the night before, her daughter clung to her, and even when she was in the shower, her daughter came and sat on the "commode." She said on the way to school that morning, she had to pull over so her daughter could throw up. (Fieldnotes, 8/31/00). Even with the worries about her daughter, Angie was in class every day during the beginning of the semester. A few weeks later, Dr. Martin told me Angie had missed a class because her daughter had to go to the hospital.

On September 1st, Angie looked better and was very active in the classroom discussion about their thesis statements (Fieldnotes). Angie volunteered to write hers on the board: "Sometimes death is easier to deal with than the Alzheimer's that comes before it." She told the class, "My grandmother died from it and my mother's starting to show signs" (Fieldnotes,

9/1/00). On September 5th, students worked on their drafts of the narrative essays, and Angie raised her hand to have Dr. Martin help her (Fieldnotes). Dr. Martin read through Angie's notes and asked her where her thesis was. Angie asked her, "Would you consider this a part of this paragraph?" Angie held her head. "I was going to add 'this' to it, but I didn't know if that would be..." Angie pointed to parts of her writing. They continued their discussion about Angie's paper while I moved to sit near other TRA students (Fieldnotes, 9/5/00).

Peer editing day was on September 8th and Angie and Elsie worked together, as they did every peer editing day during the semester (Fieldnotes). After they finished editing each other's papers, Angie told me that she and Elsie had worked together at the same factory. Angie told me, "It didn't matter the ages [of the garment workers]; we all fit together."

When Angie handed in her narrative essay, Dr. Martin made me a clean copy to use for my research. The day after the essay was handed in, I did the Primary Trait Scoring on Angie's narrative essay. The results from the rater and me are in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11 Angie's Scores on Narrative Essay

	Researcher's Scores	Rater's Scores
Composing Domain	3	3
Usage/Mechanics Domain	3	4
Written Expression Domain	2	3
Total Narrative Essay	8	10

The rater and I differed on our scoring of Angie's essay in the Usage/Mechanics and Written Expression Domains. The differences may have resulted from my having more experience in scoring essays and am, therefore, more critical of the traits. Angie's narrative essay [486 words; 26 sentences; 18 words per sentence average], "Alzheimer's in my family," (see

Appendix O.3) was mostly well-written in the Composing Domain. Her thesis statement, "It [her grandmother's Alzheimer's] made her believe death was a kind thing in the end for her own mom," was supported throughout most of the essay. She provided good illustrations to support her thesis: "My mother went every day to that nursing home for the two years that grandma was there. Bad weather didn't even keep her away."

Angie's writing did, however, have some digressions from her topic. For instance, she talked about her grandmother opening a small store and then went on to describe the store: "It was small and had candy, soda, washing powders, bread, eggs, soap, a few cooking supplies, dog food, and hog feed." Her digressions also detracted somewhat from her thesis statement.

Angie's essay also demonstrated some small problems with the Usage/Mechanics Domain, though none of them distracted me as the reader too much from her main idea. Angie had problems with consistency using pronouns: she shifted from "they" to "your" to "we." In one sentence, she shifted pronouns: "They have a way about reminding you of what you are forgetting, most of the time before we forget it." She had some small problems with capitalization and did not capitalize the proper name of "Grandma" in several places in her essay. She used the wrong word in several places: "sips" instead of "signs," "cat" instead of "eat," and "Luckily" instead of "Lucky." Also she used a comma when one was not necessary: "My sisters and I watch mom closely as the years add up on her, because we think our own mother is starting to show sips of this terrible mind erasing disease."

Angie's biggest weakness on her narrative essay was in the Written Expression Domain. She used imprecise, bland language: "At that time her youngest kid was 47 years old." Her flow was awkward; she skipped around from before her grandmother was ill, to what her mother did for her own children, to how her mother dealt with her grandmother. Also, because of her shift in pronoun use, Angie's voice was weak in the essay and rarely emerged. She also had awkward

constructions that took away from her essay: "Mom told the three of her own girls a few years later when we took her back to visit the graveyard that 'sometimes death is kinder than what we become in the very end.'"

Descriptive Essay

On September 15th, Dr. Martin put students' papers on the overhead to point out the writing tasks that they had done well (Fieldnotes). Angie's paper was one of the ones displayed. Dr. Martin showed how Angie had used freewriting to find a topic (Fieldnotes, 9/15/00). The next week, when the class discussion focused on citing specific examples for descriptive writing, the first example was related to what to do when visitors arrive unexpectedly. Angie told the class, "come to my house," when the example was elaborated to putting dirty dishes in the oven. The class laughed (Fieldnotes, 9/22/00). Angie continued to call out details for making the textbook examples more descriptive. On September 26, the class talked about clichés, among other things, and Angie asked, "What about when you do descriptive writing?" (Fieldnotes)

On October 3rd, when the descriptive essays were due, Angie brought me a copy of her paper that she had printed from her disk. I did the Primary Trait Scoring the next day. The results from the rater and me are shown in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12 Angie's Scores on Descriptive Essay

	Researcher's Scores	Rater's Scores
Composing Domain	2	3
Usage/Mechanics Domain	3	3
Written Expression Domain	3	2
Total Descriptive Essay	8	8

The rater and I differed on our assigning of scores in the Composing and Written Expression Domains. On her descriptive essay [456 words; 24 sentences; 19 words per sentence average], "The mess Lori and I call a bedroom," (see Appendix O.4), Angie did not do very well in the Composing Domain. She started out with a dominant impression, based on her thesis statement, "The room that shows Lori and my true messiness behavior is the bedroom that we share." Even though her thesis was written a bit awkwardly, she had built up to it in her first paragraph. She went on to describe just how messy their bedroom was.

Angie's descriptive essay had some shifts from the dominant impression where the reader could easily forget what Angie's essay was about: "In contrast, my living room is free from the toy and clothes clutter that exist in the bedroom." There was also some unevenness and thinness in her description: "Beside the bookshelf is a three-shelf black bookcase that houses VCR tapes." Some of her essay read like an inventory list instead of describing Angie's and Lori's bedroom: "We rarely see that shine [on the chest] because it stays covered with extra quilts, doll blankets, doll clothes, our housecoats, and outfits I laid out for us to wear the next day."

In the Usage/Mechanics Domain, Angie had a few problems with comma use. There was one comma splice in her essay: "One houses plastic farm animals, the other is packed full of Barbie dolls, clothes, car, and other fashion accessories." She used unnecessary commas in some places: "By the end of the week, we may have 9 to 12 books waiting to be put back on the 4-shelf bookcase, that appears full regardless how many are bedside." There were also problems with clarity, like in the previous sentence and, "Meanwhile, against the wall where I began is a tacky black Navy footlocker that holds toys." Finally, some sentences were overly wordy; "Entering our bedroom here, on the left rests a white metal toddler bed used only by the 4 stuffed Barneys, 15 different baby dolls, Little Bear, Polar Bear, Montgomery the Christmas bear, Tigger, and 2 stuffed Pooh Bears."

In the Written Expression Domain, Angie's essay was clear. There was only one example of figurative language present: "Singing along next is my pioneer stereo system with a white-oil heating stove close by, protruding 1/3 of the way in the middle of the room, like something with its tongue stuck out." Perhaps if Angie would have used more metaphors or some other figurative language, her essay would have been more vivid and memorable.

Angie's descriptive essay had a suitable variety of sentence lengths and complexity: "Entering my house each room has Lori and me all over it" and "I read to Lori every night before we fall asleep while lying in our double bed that is pushed against the wall." Based on her performance in the Written Expression Domain and the other Domains, Angie's total score on her descriptive essay was an eight.

Example Essay

On October 4th, while the class talked about fragments, Angie told Elsie and me that her friends "peg" her as a reader (Fieldnotes). She said she likes reading to her daughter and especially loves the Harry Potter books (Fieldnotes, 10/4/00). When I arrived at class on the 12th of October, Angie's descriptive paper was on the overhead (Fieldnotes). Dr. Martin showed the class her metaphor about the furniture looking "like its tongue is sticking out", and told them that was a nice representation of personification (Fieldnotes, 10/12/00). On October 18th, as always, Angie was an active participant in the class as they discussed an essay read for homework about what mothers want for their children (Fieldnotes). When the discussion turned to advice that parents gave when you were younger, Angie exclaimed, "I could write a book!" (Fieldnotes, 10/18/00) While working on their example essay drafts, Angie asked me a question about colons and semicolons (Fieldnotes, 11/14/00).

On November 15th, students worked on peer editing and as usual, Angie and Elsie worked together (Fieldnotes). Angie read Elsie's essay line by line. I told Dr. Martin that Angie would make a good teacher. Angie laughed and told us, "Elsie and I together would make a good student" (Fieldnotes, 11/15/00). On November 28th, as Angie worked on her Learning Plus modules, I sat beside her (Fieldnotes). I noticed on her report that she needed to work on fragments, run-ons, and comma splices. She read aloud as she did her work (Fieldnotes, 11/28/00).

When Angie gave her example essay to Dr. Martin, she also printed a copy from her disk for me. I did the Primary Trait Scoring on Angie's essay the following day. The results from the rater and me are shown in Table 4.13.

Table 4.13 Angie's Scores on Example Essay

	Researcher's Scores	Rater's Scores
Composing Domain	4	4
Usage/Mechanics Domain	3	4
Written Expression Domain	3	3
Total Example Essay	10	11

The rater and I differed in our scores by one point in the Usage/Mechanics Domain on Angie's essay. In the Composing Domain, Angie's example essay [559 words; 19 sentences; 29 words per sentence average], "Thankful to Be in College," (see Appendix O.5) was unified and well-supported. Angie's thesis statement, "I never expected at the age of 34 to go back to school, or to be so thankful to the ones who help me get here and are helping me to stay," was supported with examples throughout her essay. It was clear that Angie had an organizational plan.

Angie offered key examples in her example essay: "My sister Deborah, calls me three times a week to tell me she is proud of me and to ask me if I have been doing all my homework" and "When Cross Creek Apparel first announced they were shutting our plant down, they also told us that the company that owned us, the Russell Corporation, had set up a great severance plan for its employees." Angie's example essay also had a strong lead paragraph that made me as the reader want to read on. Finally, Angie had strong transitions in her essay: for example, at the end of the third paragraph, "That is where my terrific family stepped in and in their own ways made sure I could stay in school" is followed in the next paragraph by a thorough description of how everyone in her family has helped her.

In the Usage/Mechanics Domain, Angie had some difficulties with word choice: "loose" instead of "lose" and "help" instead of "helped." Angie used a semi-colon instead of a comma in several places in her essay: "That meant I was going to loose my job; the only way I had of supporting my daughter and my self." She put in a comma that was not necessary: "The other thing is her constant reminder, that my education today will be supporting Lori and me in the future." Also she omitted a comma that was necessary: "If I did not have my family supporting me with encouragement, money, and babysitting services I would not be able to stay in school." Her essay also had shifts in verb tenses from past to present. Angie did better with mechanical and grammatical concerns in this essay than her previous essays.

Angie's essay also had good control over the Written Expression Domain, although she used bland language and had no vivid, figurative language. Angie's voice was very strong in her essay, however: "I was so thankful to know there would be some money coming in even if it was not enough to make all the payments of keeping a house and raising my five year old." She wrote consistently in first person. She also made good use of normal word order: "They also set up a meeting for the Virginia Employment Commission to come to our work and explain all

about the Trade Act (we could attend school under this law), the way unemployment benefits are paid; the best part was when the lady from the Virginia Employment Commission told me how much my benefit and gas money check would be."

Post-Paper Interviews

Like the storyteller that she is, Angie often focused her interview responses on the content of her essays. Appalachian culture embraces the spirit of oral tradition and with it, long detailed stories about family and traditions.

In Angie's responses to the first question about with what she felt the most confident were often laced with stories expounding on the stories in her essays. For example, on her narrative essay, she said she was confident writing on facts and "from facts and family." When I probed her further to talk about her writing process, she said she felt confident "supporting the thesis statement." By the second interview on the descriptive essay, Angie told me "all I had to do was describe." In our final interview about the example paper, Angie had more to say in response to the first question. She told me how it was "hard getting down to 300-400 words. In the beginning I never thought I could write so much, now I have to make every paper smaller."

The second question focused on what challenged Angie the most while she was writing each essay. During our narrative essay interview, she told me she was challenged in "that it was never going to be good enough. I have to have an 'A.' This is what I have chosen to do to support my daughter. I have to have a job in the schools." She was very focused on her own concerns, not necessarily writing. Angie was again challenged by the length of her paper when we talked about the descriptive essay. She told me that she was challenged by "only having as many words as she [Dr. Martin} wanted [and] deciding what to leave out." She told me she always had to cut writing out of her essays. In our final post-paper interview, Angie's response

was very personal. She said she was challenged by "only being able to put a few things…especially about my family." When I asked her about her writing again, she said she said, "Commas—that is truly my weakness."

For the final post-paper interview question, I asked Angie to tell me what she focused on most for each paper. For her narrative essay, she said she focused on "the pain that my mother had to go through." This essay on her grandmother's Alzheimer's was very personal for Angie. When we talked about her descriptive essay, Angie told me, again focusing on content, "God! My bedroom's a mess!" She told me too, as she had in other interviews, that she was concerned with "what to leave out." She closed the interview by revealing that she believed "writing is fun." For our final post-paper interview, Angie again became very focused on her content and her life. She told me "I love going to school. And I hope and I pray there's nothing to stop me in the next two years." When I asked what she focused on in her writing, she told me "putting all my thoughts about the subject I'm talking about" which reflected on all of her writing assignments to that point in the semester.

Final Exam Comparison/Contrast Essay

On December 1st, students were talking about their cause and effect in-class essays, and Angie asked Dr. Martin, "Thesis is an opinion? Causes of it also an opinion?" (Fieldnotes) When the discussion centered on the effects of more mothers in the workforce, Angie added three causes: "Not enough quality time between mother and child; house stays dirty; and maybe a different example from those before" (Fieldnotes, 12/1/00). Lauren told Angie to "memorize these for the paper" and laughed. Angie said, "I thought this was a good idea" and laughed (Fieldnotes, 12/1/00). On the next topic, causes of getting married later in life, Angie

contributed five causes. On December 11th, as students did pronoun usage problems from the book, Angie got all of hers correct (Fieldnotes).

Dr. Martin made me a copy of Angie's final exam essay on December 15th. Angie chose to write about "Two jobs you have had," from the writing options sheet that Dr. Martin provided for the final exam. The results of the Primary Trait Scoring from the rater and me are in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14 Angie's Scores on Final Exam (Comparison/Contrast) Essay

	Researcher's Scores	Rater's Scores
Composing Domain	4	4
Usage/Mechanics Domain	4	4
Written Expression Domain	4	4
Total Final Exam Essay	12	12

The rater and I scored Angie's essay the same in each of the Domains. Angie's writing in the Composing Domain, for her essay entitled, "The Only Two Public Jobs I Ever Worked," [551 words; 24 sentences; 23 words per sentence average] (see Appendix O.6) contained a sharply focused central idea and was composed with key examples. Her writing was tied directly to her thesis statement: "I tied up 15 years of my life in the two jobs put together, seven years with Jefferson Mills and eight years with Cross Creek."

Angie's writing offered vivid examples of what she did at each job: about Jefferson Mills, "I was trained by a woman who used a curse word in every sentence she said, and every other sentence was about her sex life. The people at the Mill used four letter words like they were magic, and by saying them a prize would materialize out of thin air."; and about Cross Creek, "The woman who trained me to set sleeves in the shirts was very religious and didn't

allow anybody in her presence to curse. I was trained to inspect shirts after all the sewing operations had been completed, by a woman who offered to take me to church with her every time I had a problem and threatened to go back to my former place of employment." She had a strong organizational plan as she went from general to specific description about each job and then where she was in school.

Angie also did very well in the Usage/Mechanics Domain. She had several comma splices, but her essay was longer than her other ones. For example, "I went from being soaking wet to having shirt fuzz up my nose around my neck, in my hair, and all over my clothes, my family could always tell what colors I had been sewing that day." She also forgot to put a comma in this sentence. Angie used a semicolon when she should have used a comma: "I was scared to death when I started both jobs; and I cried along with my co-workers when I left both jobs." Finally, she used a comma that was not necessary: "Both factories were part of the textile industry although, the jobs were totally different." Her errors with commas in no way detracted me as the reader from the richness of her essay.

Finally, in the Written Expression Domain, Angie also scored high. She offered precise information about her two jobs: about her job at Cross Creek she wrote, "I qualified to do most of the operations in putting a shirt together from placket attach, shoulder seaming, topstitch shoulder, collar attach, topstitch placket, set sleeve, side seam, labels, vents, button-button hole, to inspection of the shirt." Her essay was certainly one that stayed in the reader's mind, in this case mine.

Exit Interview

I met with Angie in the cafeteria an hour before her final exam in Developmental Writing 03. When I met Angie for the interview, she had not written down any responses in advance.

She apologized and said she just had been too busy. She told me that she left the question sheet at home, but that she had looked over the questions. She did, however, bring copies of all of her papers with her. I asked her to read over the questions before the interview began and she did.

I asked her first, "How do you feel your writing has most improved this semester?" Angie said that she felt her writing has become "less wordy." She also commented that she now "better accepted criticism" and that it was easier for her "to ask for help." She mentioned too that she was not as afraid to sit down and write. Angie focused on writing and herself as a writer instead of just discussing her content.

I asked Angie the second question, "What three things are you most confident about in your writing?" Angie called out each number consecutively as she answered. For her, the most important thing was that she now knew she could write papers. Number two was that she was more confident asking for help. Her response for number three was that she knows where to go for help, referring to the computer and also the textbook for the class. She added that she was always worried that her writing would not be as good as everyone else's writing. Her concern about her writing was in comparison to everyone in the class, not just the other TRA students.

The third question I asked Angie, "what do you feel is still the hardest thing for you in your writing," brought an enthusiastic response. She was quick to respond with multiple responses. Her first emphatic response was "commas, commas, commas!" She said what was the hardest "depends on in-class or out-of-class" writing because she could not ask Elsie to help her when she was writing in-class essays.

For the fourth question, I asked Angie, "What do you now feel is the most important aspect (part) of writing?" Angie said that she viewed the most important aspect of writing as "learning how to tie it all together." She felt it was also important to focus on the "steps" [writing process] and "transitions."

Finally in this exit interview, I asked Angie if there was anything else she wanted to tell me about herself or her writing. Angie took a personal stance with her response. She said, "I love coming to school." She also said, "I love classes." This was all she wanted to add. She needed to go and review some notes before the exam.

Conclusion

Table 4.15 shows Angie's writing scores on all three of the out-of-class revised essays and across domains.

Table 4. 15 Angie's Scores by Rubric on All Out-of-Class (Revised) Essays

Domains / **Essays**	*Narrative Essay*	*Descriptive Essay*	*Example Essay*
Composing	Researcher: 3 Rater: 3	Researcher: 2 Rater: 3	Researcher: 4 Rater: 4
Usage/Mechanics	Researcher: 3 Rater: 4	Researcher: 3 Rater: 3	Researcher: 3 Rater: 4
Written Expression	Researcher: 2 Rater: 3	Researcher: 3 Rater: 2	Researcher: 3 Rater: 3
Total Score	8, 10	8, 8	10, 11

Angie's strongest out-of-class revised essay was the example essay, but it is also important to note that she did an extremely well-written essay for her final exam. Angie made improvement in her writing across domains, based on the Expectations of Employers sheet, and also in her confidence as a writer. Angie was always a confident young woman from the day I met her, but at the beginning, she was nervous about being back in school and writing. By the end of the semester, based on her comments in class and to me during the interviews, Angie genuinely enjoyed school and writing.

Strengths

Over the course of the semester, Angie improved most in the Composing Domain. This continued improvement in writing was also evident in Angie's writing as she refined her personal content to not just telling a simple story, but instead focusing on greater implications of her content that may have some relevance for the reader as well. She worked well with providing good examples and showing the reader how these examples worked to support her thesis. Her composing skills became a strength for Angie.

Angie also gained strengths in the Usage/Mechanics Domain. Her problem areas in this domain would not be the same errors over and over but instead new errors as she tried new ways of writing and expressing her ideas. She was very strong at writing sentences to work into her story and provided a variety of sentence structures, which were usually written correctly.

Another strength for Angie was her confidence in what she was doing as a writer. If she did not know the answer to some concern in her writing, she asked Dr. Martin. In order for her writing to continue to improve, it will be important that she seek out the answers to make her writing better. This quest to know more about writing is definitely a strength.

Angie also did well with the writing process. She always took the time provided in class to hone her essays. Her essays also demonstrated clear organization and clarity. Additionally, Angie well understood how to compose a thesis statement and how to make the thesis statement work in her paper. Support for Angie's thesis statements was also a strength; she often effectively backed what she said in her papers. Finally, Angie also became adept at using the computer to type her papers.

Weaknesses

On her Learning Plus modules, Angie's major weakness rested in the "Run-on's and Comma Splices" module. She had to do this module six times to pass and finally did pass with 100% on November 2, 2000. All of her essays had problems with commas, so I considered this one of her weaknesses. It was important to note, however, that she improved in her use of commas and semicolons, so I did not see commas as remaining a weakness for Angie as she continues to write.

The only other weakness that I sensed for Angie was that she made writing an intensely personal experience. When she has to write about academic subjects, she will need to learn not to focus only on the personal content in her writing. This factor may have reflected her difficulties in the Written Expression Domain, since Angie was often so emotional about her content that she tried to tell everything she knew and felt about her topic.

Epilogue

I met with Angie in the cafeteria one day during the spring semester so she could check the quotes I attributed to her in my writing. She was very upset and shaken because she had hit a deer on her way to school that morning. I told her we could meet some other time, but always cooperative and interested in her writing, she still wanted to have our meeting.

Angie told me that she was taking freshman English and that she was really enjoying it. She said that it was harder than Developmental Writing 03, but that she was up to the challenge. She also told me that she does not see Dr. Martin much, but she sees Elise and Danene almost every day.

Danene's Case Study

Danene came to Creekview Community College after the garment factory where she worked permanently closed in May of 2000. She had worked at the garment factory with Angie and Elsie. Danene was the youngest of the TRA students in this study and is in her mid-twenties. She is married and has one daughter who was five years old at the time of this study.

Not only is Danene younger than the other TRA students, she also looks very young. With long, straight, light brown hair, and with her casual, stylish dress, it would be easy to confuse her with a student who was right out of high school. Danene has always lived in the Appalachian region and will stay there after she graduates. She lives very close to both her mother and her husband's mother.

Danene tested into Developmental Writing 03 with a score of 56 on the Compass Placement Test. The 03 class was her first class in college. Danene is studying to be retrained as a paralegal and will take business English classes while she is at Creekview. She told me that she would also take freshman English in case she decides to continue her studies to pursue a bachelor's degree.

In-Class Writing

Danene wrote her first in-class essay on August 21, 2000, the first day of class. For the first in-class essay, Danene hand wrote her essay [140 words; 21 sentences; 6 words per sentence average], "My Family," about her husband and her daughter (see Appendix P.1).

For her last in-class essay [484 words; 33 sentences; 14 words per sentence average] that Danene wrote on December 5, 2000, she chose her topic from a list Dr. Martin provided.

Danene chose option four on the choice sheet: "Growing up in my family has influenced my life in significant ways." Once again, her essay was entitled, "My Family" (see Appendix P.2).

Both of Danene's in-class essays were given to the raters for the Forced Choice Selection. When the raters were given the essays marked A and B, one representing Danene's ("Student Two") first in-class essay and the other representing her final in class essay, all three of the raters chose Danene's ending essay.

Once the raters had done the Forced Choice Selection, I further analyzed the essays to see how Danene had done compared to the Ten Expectations of Employers sheet (see Appendix C).

For Danene's writing, there were differences between her beginning essay and ending essay. Danene's beginning paper, "My Family," was unorganized and difficult for me as the reader to follow. For instance, in the first paragraph, she ended with "I like swimming and playing with my little girl," and her second paragraph begins "Second is my husband."

There was no thesis statement in Danene's essay but instead only a statement of fact, "My family consists of three people." She continued her essay by describing each member of the family. Her essay demonstrated no sentence variety and all of the sentences were short and choppy. For example, Danene wrote, "We also have a cat, Prancer and her two kittens. There's also a fish, Frog. My little girl named it."

Additionally, her beginning essay had no sophistication in the content: "He's 24 and was born on July 5th, 1974. Yes, I like being older. He likes to hunting and fixing old cars. Yuk!" Her beginning paper was almost childlike in its simplicity and content. In Danene's short beginning paper, however, there were no grammatical or mechanical errors, but the short length of her essay probably made this lack of mistakes possible. She also hand wrote her first essay.

Danene's ending paper, also called "My Family," was a much more structured and planned essay. There was evidence of a writing process since the paper followed in a logical

order and had clear transitions. For instance, she ended her third paragraph with "After this happened, I believed the family grew up a lot," and the next paragraph started with, "My sister and I got married and had kids of our own."

Words and ideas were succinct and clear: "We were expected to eat all the food on the table at dinnertime, if we didn't we would suffer the aggravation of listening to our mother yell at us." Danene's essay also had a clear thesis statement: "I'm writing on my family because it's been hard growing up and wondering what's going to happen next." There was a lot of support for the thesis statement. She told of how her mother "was a very hard person to make happy"; she said, "My father was always gone, either at work or with my uncle, Bobby."

Danene also wrote using a variety of sentence lengths and structures: "My mother would sometimes start yelling at him and we could hear our father in the bathroom throwing up. This made us really dislike our mother because she was so hateful to our dad." There also was serious thought in her content. Danene's essay had very few problems with grammar and mechanics. One of the problems was a few missing commas: for example, "If we didn't have the chores done by the deadline time she would ground us." She had some sentences that were difficult to follow: "My mother has changed since she became a grandmother and is all along." Finally, Danene's essay was done on the computer. There was a great deal of evidence in the two pieces of writing to suggest why the raters unanimously chose Danene's end paper as the strongest.

Out-of-Class Essays/ Revised Writing

Narrative Essay

On September 1st, students wrote their proposed thesis statements on the board and Danene wrote, "Sending my child to school for the first time was hard for me to do"

(Fieldnotes). She was the last TRA student to volunteer to put her thesis statement on the board. On the first day that students start writing drafts for their narrative essay, Danene was absent (Fieldnotes, 9/5/00). Dr. Martin told me Danene was absent the day before too; I worried at the time that maybe she had dropped the class.

On the next day, September 6th, Danene was back (Fieldnotes). She told the other TRA students and me that she had been on vacation to the beach (she didn't tell Dr. Martin this in advance). She told us, "I'm doing most of my work at home, so I don't see anything wrong with missing a few classes" (Fieldnotes, 9/6/00). Danene never missed another class that I attended for the rest of the semester, although she was tardy sometimes.

When students worked on the computer composing their narrative drafts, Danene helped Lauren with Microsoft Word (Fieldnotes, 9/7/00). Danene appeared to navigate easily through the program. Toward the end of class on that same day, Danene told Lauren and me that she still had not gotten her unemployment benefits check that should have come in the mail. She was worried since Lauren had already gotten hers (Fieldnotes, 9/7/00).

September 8th was peer-editing day and Danene and Lauren worked together editing each other's papers. They shared a dictionary while they edited (Fieldnotes, 9/8/00). They worked together on peer-editing days for the rest of the semester.

When Danene handed in her narrative essay, Dr. Martin made me a clean copy to use for scoring and analysis. The day after Danene turned in her essay, the rater and I scored her narrative essay using the rubrics. Both the rater and I assigned Danene's narrative essay the same scores. The results are in Table 4.16.

Table 4.16 Danene's Scores on Narrative Essay

	Researcher's Scores	Rater's Scores
Composing Domain	2	2
Usage/Mechanics Domain	2	2
Written Expression Domain	2	2
Total Narrative Essay	6	6

Danene's narrative essay [626 words; 44 sentences; 14 words per sentence average], "My brother with Muscular Dystrophy," (see Appendix P.3) was a story about her brother's illness and how it affected her family. Danene had some difficulties in the Composing Domain. There was no clear thesis statement in her essay; at first, I could not decide if it was, "My brother, Michael has a rare form of disease called muscular dystrophy" or "It's a very rare disease and they have never been able to find out exactly where it comes from or how one can get it." Based on support for one or the other of the possible thesis statements, and since her essay was all about her brother, the first sentence was probably the thesis.

Danene's essay also had shifts in point of view: she shifted her pronouns from first person and then back and forth to second person. Her writing also had many general and underdeveloped statements. For example, "He lived a normal life for about four years before it finally struck him." Additionally, the transitions in Danene's narrative essay were hard to follow. For instance, one paragraph ended with "Where he lays in bed all day it has given him bed sores" and the next began with, "The doctors say there's all kinds of different forms of Muscular Dystrophy, but they don't know which one Michael has."

Danene's narrative essay also had multiple problems in the Usage/Mechanics Domain. She omitted commas in several places where they were necessary. For example, "The doctor told us he needed to go to a specialist so we took him." She had some comma splices: "It really

hurts to see him in such pain, I can still remember him just like yesterday as a kid." There were many cases where she used the wrong word: "effected" instead of "affected"; "its" instead of "it's"; "their" instead of "they're"; and "are" instead of "or." Danene also had multiple problems with using the possessive case: "He doesn't even get in his wheelchair anymore unless he has a doctors appointment," and "The way I see it some other kids life can be saved if they would."

Danene's narrative essay was also plagued with problems in the Written Expression Domain. Her essay used bland language: "We got scared so we took him to a doctor." Her voice rarely emerged in her essay; there was almost a guarded distance in her tone as she told the story about her brother. For example, "The doctor told us he needed to go to a specialist so we took him. She told us Michael had M.D. (muscular dystrophy) That's a disease that deteriorates the muscles." Her presentation of information about her brother's illness is uneven because I sensed that Danene tried to reveal all of the medical details. Finally, she had some sentences that were hard to understand because of their awkward construction: "My brother maybe so far gone that nothing could be done but he isn't yet." Because of the weaknesses present in Danene's narrative essay, she received a total score of six.

Descriptive Essay

Students started preparing to write their descriptive essays by doing exercises in class, but Danene rarely participated. She was always in class, but often did not contribute unless called upon. She did participate, however, on September 26th, when students concentrated on using specific words (Fieldnotes). When asked to elaborate on "The boy was tired," Danene added, "The boy was tired because he stayed out all night" (Fieldnotes, 9/26/00). Danene volunteered for several problems that day.

When Danene handed in her descriptive essay, she made an extra copy for me from her disk. The results of the rater's and my Primary Trait Scoring are shown in Table 4.17.

Table 4.17 Danene's Scores on Descriptive Essay

	Researcher's Scores	Rater's Scores
Composing Domain	3	3
Usage/Mechanics Domain	2	3
Written Expression Domain	2	3
Total Descriptive Essay	7	9

I scored Danene's writing lower than the rater on the Usage/Mechanics and Written Expression Domains. My experience as a teacher of writing may have contributed to my lower scores.

As in her first in-class essay, Danene chose to write about her daughter. Her descriptive essay [424 words; 33 sentences; 12 words per sentence average] was called "Alexandra" (see Appendix P.4). Danene did better in the Composing Domain than she had done on her narrative essay. Her essay provided a dominant impression of her young daughter. The dominant impression followed from her thesis statement: "Even though I see Alexandra in me, I also see her father in her, too." Even though her word order was confused, because I think she meant to say that she sees herself in Alexandra, the essay followed this thesis statement.

Danene's descriptive essay had some problems with irrelevant transitions. For example, she ended her third paragraph with, "The dimple is in the exact same place and looks the same when they grin," and then started her next paragraph with, "There's also Alexandra's curly hair. All I can figure out is that she got it from her Aunt Kim." Finally, she wrote a weak conclusion: "I really hate this cause I can't see that dimple or her beautiful eyes cause of the tears. I'd rather see those eyes and that dimple any day."

Danene's second paper also had some problems in the Usage/Mechanics Domain. She had some difficulties with commas, including adding extra commas and comma splices. For instance, "Alexandra has a 'pug' nose, also," and "She's his little shadow, she'd follow him anywhere." There were several instances of using semi-colons instead of commas: "So at the end of the day when it's time for bed and they get ready to take their shoes off; you'd better hope you have a clothes pin around cause once you get a smell of those big, sweaty, stinking feet, you'll need one."

Danene's essay also had frequent problems with using the right word: "to" instead of "too"; "some how" instead of "somehow"; and "cause" instead of "because." Her writing had a fragment: "Just like most are doing jumping, running, and playing." The Usage/Mechanics errors in Danene's essay made it difficult for me to follow and detracted from her writing.

Finally in the Written Expression Domain, Danene had some of the same problems with her descriptive essay that she had had with her narrative essay. Her message was not clear because some of the essay described her daughter and then some of it told of her feelings for her daughter.

Additionally, she used bland language in her writing: "I can see pictures of them together and notice the dimple." This bland language was particularly problematic since this essay was a descriptive essay. Though Danene did describe her daughter, most of her description was simple physical description. I might be able to pick her daughter of a crowd as a result of reading Danene's essay, but I still felt like I did not know much else about her. Her writing did have some sentence variety, but the essay still did not flow well: "They can both grin and you'll see this dimple on the right cheek. The dimple is in the exact same place and looks the same when they grin." Although Danene did improve over her score on her narrative essay in the Composing Domain, her composite score for her descriptive essay was still only a seven.

Example Essay

As classroom discussion shifted to the example essay, Danene continued to attend every class. On October 5th, Danene, Angie and I talked about how young Danene looks (Fieldnotes). Danene was complaining about how truck drivers flirt with her while she is on the road. She told us that she used to wear make up, but when she was working in the factory, lint would get stuck to her eyelids, so she quit wearing it. She told us she probably has blue, green and red lint balls inside of her (Fieldnotes, 10/5/00).

On October 18th, Danene contributed to the classroom discussion based on an essay that students had read for homework (Fieldnotes). Students then wrote a journal entry of their own choosing and Danene told the class that she had writer's block (Fieldnotes, 10/18/00). On November 15th, students peer-edited each other's paper (Fieldnotes). After Danene and Lauren had finished working together, Dr. Martin gave Danene another paper to edit. Danene read a male student's paper and picked on him because Danene said he "cuts on women." She had most of the class laughing (Fieldnotes, 11/15/00). While students worked on Learning Plus on November 28th, Danene wrote in her journal since she was finished with her modules (Fieldnotes).

When Danene handed in her example essay, Dr. Martin made a copy of her ungraded essay for me. The results of the Primary Trait Scoring that the rater I did are shown in Table 4.18.

Table 4.18 Danene's Scores on Example Essay

	Researcher's Scores	Rater's Scores
Composing Domain	3	3
Usage/Mechanics Domain	3	3
Written Expression Domain	4	4
Total Example Essay	10	10

The rater and I gave Danene's example essay the same scores in each Domain. Danene showed improvement on her example essay [493 words; 39 sentences; 12 words per sentence average], "Dream Home or Not" (see Appendix P.5). In the Composing Domain, Danene wrote well. Her thesis statement, "We thought we were getting away from the problems in our old trailor [sic], but our new home had problems, too," was supported with a story full of precise information and vocabulary. For example, she described the walls and said, "The walls were a cream color instead of the white they were suppose to have been, so we had to put up new wall paper."

Danene's example essay had a strong lead: "In January, of this year, my husband and I went to look for a new trailor [sic]. Our old trailor only had two bedrooms and one bathroom. It just wasn't enough room for our little girl's toys. Her toys are like wildflowers, taking over our house." She used strong transitions and presented a logically told story. After her thesis sentence, for example, the next paragraph started with, "First of all, our old trailor was having a few problems." She consistently used the first person point of view: "There seemed to be no end to the disasters that hit our old, ugly, worn-out, unlucky trailor."

By her third essay, Danene also had fewer problems in the Usage/Mechanics Domain. She had some problems with spelling and word choice: "though" instead of "through"; "trailor" instead of "trailer" (these might have been typographical errors since Danene appeared to have

done the paper on an old word processor that did not appear to have spell-check); "its" instead of "it's"; and "suppose" instead of "supposed." She left a word out of one sentence: "Not even a week we had found the trailor we wanted." She also wrote grammatically incorrect and said, "I can't hardly wait."

Danene's example essay had a comma splice: "A month after we moved in, none of the doors would shut, the closet and cabinet doors were slanted and wouldn't shut either." Danene also forgot to insert an apostrophe to show a contraction and put "its" instead of "it's." Finally, she had a misplaced description: "They even left ruts in our yard ankle deep." Her mechanical and grammatical problems were minor and did not detract from her example essay.

Danene's example essay was well-written in the Written Expression Domain. Her essay had many examples of figurative language. For instance, "It was like a never ending tornado, disaster after disaster!" Her tone was consistent. She provided precise information and vocabulary: "Christmas is coming up and I can't hardly wait [sic]. My home is going to shine with all the lights I'm going to put on it. I guess in a way I'm showing off my new home. I believe that means its my dream home after all." Additionally, she also varied her sentence lengths and varieties: "We finally saw a trailor that we fell in love with. It had three bedrooms and two baths, just what we wanted." Her improvement in her writing on this example essay was reflected in her final score of ten.

Post-Paper Interviews

Danene was a difficult participant to interview. She often arrived late, missed appointments or told me she was tired. Her post-paper interviews, consequently, revealed little about Danene as a writer.

For the first interview question, Danene often replied with personal responses about the content of her essays. On our interview about her narrative essay, Danene told me she was most confident because "I'm telling a story…I wanted to make sure I wouldn't be hurting my brother's feelings." When we talked about her descriptive essay, Danene referred to her daughter and said, "I told what she looked like. I done [sic] a pretty good job." Finally, when we discussed her example essay, Danene focused more on her experiences as a writer. She told me she was confident because "I knew all the problems…I feel more confident writing."

The second post-paper interview question asked Danene to focus on her writing challenges for each essay. For her narrative essay, Danene said her biggest challenge was "telling how it affects us as a family" and also "providing detail." She told me when we talked about her descriptive essay that she was challenged "writing it [the paper] like it's supposed to be wrote." She also told me she was concerned about where to put commas and semi-colons, a solution to avoiding fragments. When we talked about her example essay, Danene told me she did not have much to say about challenges. She said, "I don't know…telling a story."

The last question for the post-paper interviews asked Danene to tell me what she focused on while she was writing. For her narrative essay, she said she focused on "not making sentences too short and making longer paragraphs." She also mentioned working on "key words." Her discussion reflected what had been covered in class for the narrative essay. When we talked about her descriptive essay, Danene told me she focused "on looking for fragments." She also talked about the content of her essay and said she focused on "what's alike about us [she and her daughter]." In our last post-paper interview for the example essay, Danene said she was concerned "not to make few sentences," which meant making sure her paper was long enough. She told me she was also focused on "putting things together in paragraphs," which

meant she was concerned that she would have topic sentences and that her essay would be coherent.

Final Exam/Comparison Contrast Essay

While students prepared for their comparison/contrast final exam essays, they also discussed the final in-class essay. On December 1st, students prepared for their final in-class essay, and although the other three TRA students were active participants in the discussion, Danene only contributed once. When the example on the board was "effects of a good teacher," Danene added, "Easier to talk to teacher about problems" (Fieldnotes, 12/1/00).

On December 7th, before class, Danene, Lauren and some other students talked about how they were as students in high school. Danene told us she always stayed in the back of the class and slept. One student joked with her that she probably always had a red mark on her head. Danene said, "Yeah, marks from my rings" (Fieldnotes, 12/7/00). In a discussion about pronoun usage on December 11th, Danene contributed by providing answers for exercises from the book, but only after Dr. Martin had called on her (Fieldnotes).

After Danene completed her final exam essay, Dr. Martin made a copy for me. The results of the Primary Trait Scoring that was done by the rater and me are shown in Table 4.19.

Table 4.19 Danene's Scores on Final Exam (Comparison/Contrast) Essay

	Researcher's Scores	Rater's Scores
Composing Domain	3	3
Usage/Mechanics Domain	3	3
Written Expression Domain	3	3
Total Final Exam	9	9

Both the rater and I gave Danene's final exam essay the same scores. Danene's comparison/contrast essay [357 words; 31 sentences; 11 words per sentence average], "Pluma

Verses Cross Creek," (see Appendix P.6), was effective in the Composing Domain. Her thesis statement was the first sentence of her paper: "My two jobs are somewhat the same, but there's a lot of difference between them to [sic]." Her essay supported this thesis statement with examples. For instance, about Pluma she wrote, "Usually the plant manager was nice to let employees out of work if they had something to take care of." About Cross Creek she wrote, "If anyone missed over twenty-seven hours they would be fired."

In her writing, Danene purposely supported the stark differences between the two garment factories. For example, she wrote about the production standard at each of the factories: at Pluma, "The production standard wasn't very high and could easily be made"; and at Cross Creek, "This factory had a line production standard, everyone had to make production or the whole line had to work overtime." Her essay also had some shifts in voice from first person "I" to second person "you."

In the Usage/Mechanics Domain, Danene's essay contained several comma splices: "The factory wasn't very big, it may have held a little over one hundred people." Similar to her other essays, she still had a problem confusing "to" with "too" and "there" with "their." She had multiple misuses of "to" in this essay. Danene also omitted a comma that was necessary: "If anyone missed over twenty-seven hours they would be fired." Finally, she wrote "over seas" instead of "overseas."

Danene also had good control over the Written Expression Domain in her comparison/contrast essay. Her message was clear as she compared the differences in the two factories. She used some vague words: "I put my time and energy into that place. It was a very good place to work for." She never elaborated on how she did these things or why it was specifically good. She had a few awkward constructions, but they did not take away from her essay's meaning. For example, "They really didn't like it when new people started and were in

there lines, because this would always set them back and they'd have to work overtime." Based on her writing for the example essay, Danene scored a nine.

Exit Interview

When I interviewed Danene in the cafeteria on the day of the final exam, I met with her at the same time I met with Angie. This time was the only time when both of the women could meet since their final exam week was hectic for them. I asked Danene the exit interview questions individually, however.

I asked Danene first, "How do you feel your writing has most improved this semester?" She brought the prepared questions with her and had written down some responses to the questions. In her prewritten responses, she wrote how "I didn't feel as confident at first like I do now." She also had written, "I feel it [her confidence] has changed a lot." She told me that she has improved "on putting one thing in one paragraph." I asked her what she meant and she said it meant working with topic sentences.

Similar to the question during the post paper interviews, I asked Danene what she was now most confident with in her writing. She had written down the three things she was now most confident about, but added some comments during the interview. Number one for Danene was "that I'm better at my writing." She cited number two as "that I can put the right things in the right paragraph." Danene pinpointed number three as "that I don't make fuse [sic] or runon [sic] sentences." She also added that she was "not afraid" of the teacher. Danene's confidence increased as her comfort with the instructor increased.

I then asked Danene, "What do you feel is still the hardest thing for you in your writing?" Danene had also written down some responses to question three. She said for her it was still hardest "to start writing and to figure out what to write about." A different focus from that in the

other interviews was introduced, that of choosing a topic. When probed for further responses, Danene said that she could not think of anything else to say.

Next I asked Danene what she felt was the most important aspect of writing. Danene had again written her responses in advance. She felt it was important to "try and do it right the 1st time." She believed too that the writer should "take your time." When asked for further answers and/or comments, she said that she did not have anything to add.

Finally I asked Danene, "Is there anything else you would like to tell me about you and your writing?" Danene had written a response down on her sheet. She said, "I fell [sic] alot [sic] more confident in myself now." She also said during the interview that for her, writing was "getting easier." Danene said too that when she came to school, "I knew nothing about computers. At first I didn't want to ask nobody. She gave us confidence, the teacher."

Conclusion

Table 4.20 shows Danene's writing scores on all three of the out-of-class revised essays and across domains.

Table 4. 20 Danene's Scores by Rubric on All Out-of-Class (Revised) Essays

Domains / **Essays**	*Narrative Essay*	*Descriptive Essay*	*Example Essay*
Composing	Researcher: 2 Rater: 2	Researcher: 3 Rater: 3	Researcher: 3 Rater: 3
Usage/Mechanics	Researcher: 2 Rater: 2	Researcher: 2 Rater: 3	Researcher: 3 Rater: 3
Written Expression	Researcher:2 Rater: 2	Researcher: 2 Rater: 3	Researcher: 4 Rater: 4
Total Score	6, 6	7, 9	10, 10

Danene's writing in the out-of-class revised essays continued to improve. Even though the conditions for the final exam essay were different, she also had improved on her writing of this essay. Based on the in-class essays, out-of-class revised writing and her final exam, Danene's writing reflected some strengths and weaknesses.

Strengths

Danene's writing was strong in the Written Expression Domain by the end of the semester. She was able to write with precise information and give her reader a picture about her topic. Her writing also had more figurative language, which provided more vivid description in her writing.

Danene also developed strengths in writing using a writing process approach. She began to use more class time for preparing her writing and took time to revise her drafts during class. The improvement in her writing also reflected her use of the writing process.

Her writing also developed strengths in adding support for her thesis and using a variety of sentence types. Additionally, Danene did well with organization and planned her papers in a logical order. Finally one of Danene's strengths was also that she used the computer to write her papers.

Another strength for Danene as a writer was her building confidence. This confidence was most evident in her final interviews, where she mentioned her growing confidence in herself as a writer specifically.

Weaknesses

Most of Danene's weaknesses were in grammatical and mechanical concerns. She had a difficult time using commas correctly. Her papers had many comma splices and omissions of

necessary commas. Danene's time spent doing the Learning Plus modules was the least of all the TRA women. She spent barely over five hours for the whole semester. Her overall score was a 71% and she scored only the minimum 86% on the "Run-on's and Comma Splices," and many of the other comma-oriented modules.

Another of her major weaknesses was using the wrong word in her essays. When Danene first attempted the "Confusing Words" module, she scored only a 29%, although on her second try she received a 100%. These scores are contradictory since she continued to show difficulty with confusing words in her writing. I think that this could have been corrected if she would have more carefully edited her own writing before she handed her final draft in to Dr. Martin. Most of her grammatical problems were surface errors.

Finally, Danene needed to work on the transitions in her essays. Her flow was disrupted usually by the awkward moves from one paragraph to the next. Sometimes her writing was hard to follow because of her lack of or faulty transitions.

Epilogue

I talked on the telephone with Danene during the Spring semester. She told me she was worried about finding jobs if she becomes a paralegal. Being a paralegal would mean that she would have to work in towns that were not close by to her home. She said she will be taking a real estate class and some medical law transcription classes to boost her resume. Danene said she definitely does not want to be a secretary.

Danene told me she was currently taking freshman English and that next semester she will take business English. She told me the class was "sort of harder" because the teacher has an accent. Otherwise, she said they pretty much do what Dr. Martin did with the class. She said

she was worried about business writing because they are "picky," but that she has been "learning by e-mailing."

Finally, Danene told me that at first she was nervous being around eighteen year olds at the college, but now "I think they respect me more." She told me in closing, "I regret not going to college before."

Cross-Case Analysis

In this cross-case analysis, both the women's writing skills and their attitudes as writers are examined. First, there is an explanation of the tables that represent the women's writing improvement. Next there is a discussion of the women's writing commonalities on their in-class writing, followed by a discussion of their commonalities in writing their out-of-class revised essays. Then there is a discussion of their commonalities on their final exam writing. Finally, there is an analysis of how the women talked about themselves as writers, across cases.

In order to have a graphical representation for depicting the four TRA women's progress with their writing skills, a table representing their writing skills, based on the Writing Expectations of employers and also one based on the Domain rubrics, follows. The women's writing for the in-class essays was analyzed in Table 4.21, which used the Employer Expectations' sheet for its categories. The out-of-class revised writing was analyzed in Table 4.22, which used the Domain rubrics for its categories. The women's overall progress mark is based on their improvement with particular writing skills, as derived from my analysis of the women's writing over the course of the semester. Their improvement was not determined by looking at their individual progress from beginning to end but instead on their overall writing improvement based on the objectives of the developmental course and workplace writing. The final exam essay is not included in the tables since it was not considered in-class or out-of-class

revised writing. There is a brief discussion of the final exam essay at the end of this cross-case analysis.

For both Table 4.21 and Table 4.22, there are three possible marks that the women's overall writing in each category could receive: N=no improvement; S=some improvement; and M=much improvement. If a TRA student's writing had the same characteristics and errors at the end of the semester as it did at the beginning of the semester, then her writing received "no improvement." If the woman's writing had continuous improvement on a writing skill throughout the semester, then she received "some improvement." Finally, if a writing skill was no longer a consistent problem for a TRA student, even though errors in that category may have still been present in her writing on occasion, then she received "much improvement."

Commonalities as Writers Based on In-Class Writing

Table 4.21 Women's Progress Based on Employers' Expectations

Writing Skill	Elsie	Lauren	Angie	Danene
Demonstration of writing process	M	M	M	M
Organization of essays	M	M	M	M
Clarity of writing	M	M	M	M
Thesis statement	M	M	M	M
Support for thesis	S	M	M	M
Sentence variety	M	M	M	M
Content (depth; serious thought)	M	M	M	M
Editing evident	S	M	M	M
Grammar/Mechanics (standard English)	S	S	S	S
Computer used for writing	*	*	*	*

N=No improvement

S=Some improvement

M=Much improvement
*Students were not assessed on this skill in this table since it was not taught in the Developmental Writing 03 class; however, it was still important for employers' expectations.

The women made at least some progress in all of their writing skills on their in-class essays, based on the Employers' Expectations sheet. Many of the skills for writing that they acquired will help them with their future academic writing as well as their writing in their future workplace. In-class writing closely resembles writing in the workplace because it is writing that is written in a short period of time and often on a topic not chosen by the writer. Also in-class writing is mainly concerned with the final product, which resembles writing in the workplace.

Sweigart (1996) said the most important goal of developmental writing is to improve the writing of individual students. For the TRA women, it was important to improve their writing skills for the rest of their academic writing, but it was equally important to improve their writing skills for their future careers. Regardless of what future career goals these four women have, they will be required to write in the workplace (Agnew; 1992; Saffer, 1999; White, 1997). Based on my analysis of all the women's in-class writing, their writing had improved by the end of the semester.

In-class writing in the Developmental Writing 03 class provided an opportunity for the students to demonstrate their use of Standard English. One of the most important skills for writing in business is using Standard English correctly (Ascher, 1988; Baugh, Fryar, & Thomas, 1987; Boosalis, 1998; Davis, 1983; Hays, 1999; White, 1997). When employees write in the workplace, grammatical and mechanical problems are one of the most common writing problems for them (Cole, Manor, McDonald, Nehaus, & Scanlan, 1999; White, 1997). Using Standard English represents using usage, mechanics, and grammar correctly in writing. With multiple

mistakes in these areas of writing, a piece of writing is no longer clear and is judged by its reader to be inadequate.

Unfortunately, one of the commonalities among the TRA students' writing was their continued errors in using Standard English. Number nine on the Writing Expectations sheet, "Grammar/Mechanics," was a category that included many characteristics of poor writing, such as fragments, misspellings, run-ons, comma use, and using correct words out of commonly confused word pairs (affect/effect, loose/lose…).

All four of the women had some difficulties with grammar, mechanics, and usage throughout the semester, and some of these difficulties were still evident by the end of the semester. It is important to note, however, that the women's papers were longer, and due to the length, there were more opportunities for errors. The final in-class essays, for instance, were at least double in length than the beginning in-class essays. If the essays had been the same length and contained the same consistency of errors, then the women would have shown no demonstrable improvement in handling standard written English.

The women demonstrated at least some improvement in some other areas of writing. Using a process of writing lead students to use editing skills, improve on the clarity of their writing, and also to organize their essays in a way that the reader could follow.

A demonstration of the writing process is a skill in which all of the women had much improvement. At the beginning of the semester, when the TRA students wrote their first in-class essay, all of the women handed in a single sheet of paper with their essay on it. There were no prewriting, no drafts, and no edited copies of their papers. Students initially saw writing as simply producing a product, and similarly they viewed writing as linear process, one where the writer begins writing and goes straight through to the end product.

Since writing as a process is a technique that most experienced writers use, it was to be expected that the women wrote without using any steps of a writing process. Shaughnessy (1977) said, "the beginning writer does not know how writers behave" (p. 79). Agnew (1992) confirmed, "It is generally agreed that most college students, particularly basic writers, benefit from such pedagogical practices as collaborative writing, peer editing, sequenced assignments, multiple drafting, [and] varied writing formats..." (p. 36).

In the workplace, although not always called the "writing process," it is important that employees take the time to plan their writing, write multiple drafts and do some sort of editing before handing over their report, memo, or some other piece of writing. Davis (1983), in his instruction on how to write effectively in business, called the steps of writing in business: predrafting, drafting, and postdrafting. Even under different names, the writing process still is as important in business as it is academic writing (Baugh et. al, 1987; Davis, 1983).

Editing is one of the most important skills associated with the writing process. Additionally, improving in grammatical and mechanical concerns could be directly related to editing skills, yet Elsie, Lauren and Angie showed much improvement in their editing skills. This improvement was based on the fact that the TRA students would use their class time for editing proficiently, would make hand-written corrections on their own final draft before handing the essay in to Dr. Martin, and that they would actively participate in the peer-editing sessions during class. Whether the women were editing their own papers or another student's paper (as in the out-of-class revised essays), they would have to know that something grammatical/mechanical was wrong in order to correct it or to indicate that it may be wrong. The knowledge of what to correct was particularly important to consider when the women wrote their in-class essays since they were the sole editors of their papers.

Even with Dr. Martin's instruction, the textbook examples, the inside cover of the text book listing editing skills, and the Learning Plus modules on editing grammar/mechanics, there is no possible way to learn in a semester how to do everything in writing correctly. Agnew (1992) found that even in the workplace, former developmental writers were conscientious and knew that they needed to edit their writing. Even though the women improved in their editing skills, they still had room for more improvement.

When students view writing as a process, there are some other areas of writing that they can more clearly understand. For example, on the Employers' Expectations sheet, all of the four TRA students showed much improvement in the organization of their essays. When their essays were organized well, the reader could follow the logic of the order of information. Of course, organization is relevant to any kind of writing, including writing in the workplace (Barry & Ellison, 1997; Baugh, Fryar & Thomas, 1987; Davis, 1983).

Also associated with a skill that results in editing and writing multiple drafts as a part of the writing process, clarity of writing was another area in which all four women showed much improvement. Clarity involves getting ideas across to the reader well enough for the reader to understand. Being clear is another quality that is especially important for business writing, since writing meets its purpose when it is clear (Baugh et al., 1987; White, 1997). Cole et al. (1999), in their discussion of writing expectations in the workplace, summarized:

> Good written communication involves transmitting a clear and concise message. Clearness in written communication is being able to get the idea across to your specific audience. Conciseness was described as summarizing information accurately. Businesses expect college graduates to be clear and concise when using forms of written communication." (p.1)

Baugh et al. said, too, of business writing and clarity, "the best way to clarify your language is to edit ruthlessly" (p. 31).

Although they still had difficulties in some areas of writing, especially usage, mechanics, and grammar, the four TRA women were writing better at the end of the semester than they were at the beginning. Again, based on my analyses and rating of the in-class essays, all four of the women showed at least some improvement in all of the examined areas of writing. The women's grammar, mechanics and usage skills still needed improvement in order to make their skills acceptable for writing in the workplace, but the women should have multiple opportunities to improve further as they continue their education at the community college.

Commonalities as Writers Based on Out-of-Class Revised Writing

Table 4.22 Women's Progress Based on Rubrics in Each Domain

Writing Skill	Elsie	Lauren	Angie	Danene
Composing Domain				
Dominant impression	M	M	M	M
Key examples	M	M	M	M
Transitions	S	M	S	M
Usage/Mechanics Domain				
Comma use	S	S	S	S
Using correct words	S	S	M	S
Fragments/Run-ons (eliminating)	S	S	S	S
Written Expression Domain				
Avoids awkward constructions	M	M	M	S
Consistent use of voice	S	M	M	M
Sentence variety	M	M	M	M

N=No improvement
S=Some improvement
M=Much improvement

The four TRA women also made improvement in their out-of-class revised essay writing. Each of their essays showed at least some improvement in all of the three Domain rubrics. Additionally, many of the characteristics analyzed in the women's in-class essays paralleled those skills evident in good writing within each of the Domains.

As with the in-class essays, one of the commonalities with the women's writing was their continued errors with usage and mechanics. In the out-of-class revised essays, these skills were analyzed using the Usage/Mechanics Domain rubric. This category, like that on the Employers' Expectation sheet, contained many characteristics of writing such as fragments, misspellings, run-ons, comma use, and using correct words out of commonly confused word pairs (affect/effect, loose/lose…).

In the Usage/Mechanics Domain, a common area of weakness in the women's writing was comma use. Perhaps one of the hardest of all punctuation skills to master, comma use, e.g. comma omission, comma splices, and adding extra commas, continued to be problems for the women in their writing. White (1997) said that one of the most common mistakes in business writing is "misuse of commas" (p. 2). Further, Barry and Ellison's (1997) business writing text dedicated three chapters of their text to comma use alone. Although all four women had some improvement in their comma use, they still made many mistakes. When these mistakes were comma splices, the errors made it difficult to follow the writer's meaning. Furthermore, the Learning Plus module that posed the most difficulty for all four women was the one on commas.

Problems with comma use can lead to other usage problems such as run-ons and fragments. Having run-ons and fragments in writing also tends to confuse the reader, again

making the meaning unclear. Although all four of the women had begun to make some improvement in avoiding run-ons and fragments, they still did not always avoid them in their writing. As Agnew (1992) found in her research of former developmental writing students, employees want to look professional to their bosses, coworkers, and clients, and with fundamental mechanical errors like fragments and run-ons present in their writing, the women's writing would lose credibility as professional.

Furthermore, Elsie, Lauren and Danene still had difficulties with using correct words in their writing. They would often confuse words such as: quiet and quite; too and to; their and there; and other similar troublesome words. When writing in business, meaning can be misconstrued if the employee does not write what he/she means by using the correct word (Barry & Ellison, 1997; Baugh, Fryar, & Thomas, 1987; Davis, 1983). Using the wrong word consistently could muddle the meaning of a piece of writing.

Within the Composing Domain rubric, one of the key skills to learn is writing as a process. This Domain parallels the "demonstration of a writing process" point on the Employers' Expectations sheet used for analyzing the in-class writing. As the women made progress in their in-class writing process, they did too in their out-of-class revised essays. For instance, by the end of the semester, when I went with Dr. Martin to photocopy the women's final drafts, each paper was stapled to a stack of prewriting activities and drafts.

Not only were students given time during class to work on their drafts for the narrative, descriptive, and example essays, they were encouraged to prepare prewriting activities, thesis statements, and rough drafts at home. Shaughnessy (1977), in her work with basic (developmental) writers, found that these students do well with "new competencies, namely the skills of the encoding process and the skill of objectifying a statement, of looking at it, changing

it by additions, subtractions, substitutions, or inversions, taking the time to get as close a fit as possible between what [s]he means and what [s]he says on paper" (p.79).

The women also made much improvement in other areas of the Composing Domain. As discussed with the in-class writings, clarity is an important issue in writing both in academia and the workplace. Perhaps the best way to achieve clarity in writing is to provide a dominant impression. A dominant impression can be achieved by providing a clear thesis statement and also providing support for the thesis through using key examples. All four of the women made much improvement in writing a clear thesis statement for their essays. Although Elsie only made some improvement in providing support for her thesis, she and the other three TRA students made much improvement using key examples to support and illustrate their thesis statement in their writing.

Further, all four of the women made much improvement in their writing by using a variety of sentences, both types and lengths. Although in business, writing is often confined to short, to the point sentences, the women will need to know how to write effective sentences. According to Saffer (1999), in her discussion of how English skills transfer to the workplace, "Learning how to construct sentences and paragraphs lays the groundwork for writing effective letters, essays, term papers, and reports" (p. 4).

In summary, all of the TRA students showed at least some improvement in their out-of-class revised writing skills, based on the Domain rubrics. Their improvement was also reflected in the in-class essays that they wrote for the Developmental Writing 03 class. The writing skills covered in the Domain rubrics, similar to those in the Employers' Expectations sheet, will be important writing skills for the women both in their future writing classes and the workplace.

Commonalities as Writers Based on Final Exam Essays

Although the final exam essays shared common traits with the in-class essays and the out-of-class revised essays, they were a unique, one-time opportunity for the writing evaluated in this study. The final exam comparison/contrast essays resembled the in-class essays in that they were written in the classroom and that the students were not allowed to peer edit their writing. The final exam essays also resembled the out-of-class revised writing because they were written in a longer than fifty-minute class period and the students had more opportunity to prewrite, write several drafts and edit their essays. Further, of all of the types of writing examined and analyzed for this study, the final exam essays most closely resemble the circumstances under which writing occurs in the workplace. Workers will often have more than one sitting to compose their writing, will be provided the opportunity to prepare more than one draft, and will have the chance to edit their work before handing in the final draft. However, there would probably be no consistent peer-editing process in a workplace setting.

On their final exam comparison/contrast essays, Lauren and Angie demonstrated control over their writing and did well in all three of the Domains. They both had a limited number of errors in the Usage/Mechanics Domain. Additionally, they chose their words carefully and provided key examples for their thesis sentences.

Elsie and Danene did not do as well as Lauren and Angie on their final exam essays, but still had more control over their writing than they had at the beginning of the semester. They had fewer errors in the Usage/Mechanics Domain than they had at the beginning of the semester. Also it was evident by the cohesiveness of their writing that they had done either some prewriting and/or some drafting in preparing their final exam essay.

Finally, it is important to note that the comparison/contrast essay is a difficult essay for developmental students to write. Shaugnessey (1977) said that developmental writing students often have problems using comparisons in their writing (pp.56-58). She described how developmental writers have difficulties with not only the surface level of comparing two things, but also with trying to write an entire essay equally balancing the comparison. In business, comparison and contrast is something that employees must often do. They may be required to do this task in product shopping or making a claim that their service is the best one. The women showed not only some improvement of the writing skills in each of the Domains on their final exam essay, but also that they could reasonably make a comparison/contrast in their essays.

Talking about Themselves as Writers

As Haynes-Burton (1995) found in her work with developmental and nontraditional students, "many of them are more organized in their approach to assignments, yet they are less confident of their ability to convey their thoughts. In these instances, it is simply a matter of showing them how to channel the confidence they possess in other areas of their life and apply it to writing problems" (p. 106). Also Holmstem (1999), in her study of developmental writers, found that self-confidence was an early concern for developmental writers. As indicated in my fieldnotes and post-paper interviews, Elsie, Lauren, Angie and Danene all came into the Developmental Writing 03 class with feelings of apprehensiveness and nervousness, both about being in college for the first time and also about writing. Writing was still an uncharted territory

for them at the beginning of the semester. As Creel, Kuhne and Riggle (2000) said about developmental writers, they lacked confidence at the beginning of the class.

During interviews, one of my main concerns was that I could not get the women to talk about themselves as writers. Instead, all four of the TRA women talked about their stories and their writing content during interviews. Certainly on their out-of-class revised writing, the women had chosen all of their own topics and they were topics with which they were comfortable and familiar. It was easier and more comfortable for the TRA students to tell me their stories than to talk about themselves as writers.

The narrative essay was their first revised writing. As in most developmental/basic writing classes, the narrative is assigned first because it is writing that allows the telling of personal experiences and often the telling in language that is familiar and comfortable for the students. Narrative writing gives the student a chance to share her own experiences. As Villanueva (1997) described in his historical account of narrative writing's development, narrative writing in a writing course is the beginning of teaching students "the relation[ship] between personal experience and the external world" (p. 475). Further, Bartholomae (1997) referred to narrative writing, which he also called "creative nonfiction" and "literary non-fiction," "as a way to celebrate individual vision, the detail of particular worlds" (p. 485).

Once the TRA students had written their narratives, and found success, their confidence as writers continued to grow throughout the semester. They gained confidence as they wrote even more difficult types of essays. Even the more difficult example essay and comparison/contrast essay, which more closely resemble academic writing, did not deter the women's confidence.

In their exit interviews, the TRA students directly addressed their feelings about having more confidence. Elsie said that she was not as nervous about writing. Angie told me that she

knew now that she could write papers. Lauren said that she did not fear writing as she had before the class. Danene said that she did not feel as confident at the beginning of the semester as she did at the end. The women were the most active members of the whole class, they had nearly perfect attendance, and they became comfortable in going to Dr. Martin for help before, during and after class. Essentially, they worked hard at doing well in the class, and their writing improvement shows as a result. Additionally, their confidence helped them to find success in the class.

The confidence the TRA students gained as writers will be a positive factor in helping them to write better in the workplace. Tyler (1994) found, in her study of workers who participated in basic skills training classes, including writing, that of all the benefits the training classes provided, "improved employee morale/self-esteem" was the most important and the most noticed by employers (p. 5). Similarly, Agnew (1992) said, in her study of previous developmental writers now in their workplaces, former basic writers felt "purpose and motivation" (p. 36).

Summary

When the four TRA women go back out into the workforce in a year, they will encounter yet another new experience. They have worked in the garment industry as their only public job for most of their lives. They are going to college for the first time in their lives. With their improved writing skills and confidence in themselves as writers, they should be better prepared to enter their new professions.

Chapter Five

Discussion of Findings

This chapter looks at the significant findings of the study. First there is a discussion of the findings of the study based on the answers to the research questions and research about developmental writing and workplace writing. Next there is a section on conclusions based on the findings of the study. Following this section is a discussion of the implications of this study for professional practice and research. Then there are recommendations for future research. Finally, there is the conclusion for this chapter.

Discussion of Findings: Research Questions

There were two research questions that guided this descriptive study:

- In what ways do the writing skills of Trade Readjustment Act (TRA) students change during a developmental writing class? [Question One]
- In what ways do TRA students talk about themselves as writers while participating in a developmental writing class? [Question Two]

Table 5.1 represents which data sources addressed which research question.

Table 5.1 Data Sources for Research Questions

Data Sources	Question One	Question Two
In-class writing analysis (including Primary Trait Scoring results)	X	
Out-of-class revised writing analysis (including Forced Choice selection results)	X	
Exam essay analysis	X	
Post paper interviews		X
Exit interviews		X
Fieldnotes analysis		X

Question One

Based on the analyses of the four TRA students' in-class essays, out-of-class revised essays, and final exam essays, the women's writing did show improvement over the course of the Fall 2000 semester. Additionally, the results of the Primary Trait Scoring and the Forced Choice Selection also demonstrated that the women's writing showed improvement.

Since the women's writing improved, there was evidence that their writing skills changed during their participation in the Developmental Writing 03 class. This developmental writing class was the only writing class that all four of the TRA women took during the Fall 2000 semester, and it was the first college class that the four women took. Furthermore, the TRA students were not receiving any other formal writing instruction in their coursework. The analyses presented in each woman's case study and the cross-case analysis described exactly how the women's writing changed.

In terms of the Employer's Expectations sheet [see Appendix C], which listed ten features of good writing for business and was used for further analysis of the women's in-class writing, the TRA students' writing showed at least some improvement in all of the areas. The TRA students' areas of writing that showed the most improvement were their demonstration of using a writing process, organization and clarity of their essays, using a thesis statement to guide their writing, and giving serious thought to the content of their essays. They showed some improvement with their grammatical skills in their in-class writing, but by the end of the semester, they still needed to work on skills such as commas, using words correctly, and overall correctness in using Standard English. These skills cannot be expected to change significantly in just one semester of writing instruction. Grammar was not taught as a separate focus in the developmental writing class but instead was taught through writing. The women still needed to improve upon their grammar skills and will have the opportunity to do so in their continuing

education. Research over the last century has demonstrated that grammar taught in isolation from writing does not help to improve the use of grammar in students' writing. Bushman (1984) described, in his studies of how teaching grammar through writing works in the classroom, "early studies suggest that grammar study [as a separate entity] does *not* improve students' ability to write" (p. 99).

The writing features on which the women improved, as well as those skills on which they still needed to improve, are skills related to good writing in the academy and the workplace (Barry & Ellison, 1997; Doyle & Fueger, 1995; Baugh, Fryar, & Thomas, 1987; Davis, 1983; Shaughnessy, 1977; White, 1997;). It is also important that the women's writing skills improved since they will continue to be required to write, regardless of their majors and their future professions. Since poor writing in the workplace is a major complaint of employers, enhanced writing skills will help the women in their jobs (Cole, Manor, McDonald, Nehaus & Scanlan, 1999; Hays, 1999; McGarvey, 1999).

Additionally, in the three Domains that were used for analyzing the women's out-of-class revised writing, all of the women's writing showed at least some improvement. The four TRA students showed the most improvement in the Composing Domain and the Written Expression Domain. Similar to their in-class writing assessment, the women's writing had the most errors in the Usage/Mechanics Domain. Although they showed some improvement in their usage and mechanics skills, they still needed to improve further on these features of writing.

The women had more knowledge on how to put together their essays by prewriting, drafting and editing, which are skills that will help them in their future writing, including in the workplace (Agnew, 1992; Davis, 1983). Their writing skills for composing and expressing their ideas through writing changed during the progression of the semester as was evidenced in their improvement on their scores on the rubrics, which represented the traits of good writing. The

traits represented by the rubrics are ones that are also important in writing in the workplace (Barry & Ellison, 1997; Hays, 1999; Saffer, 1999).

Question Two

Since question two dealt specifically with how the women talked about and viewed themselves as writers, the post-paper interviews, exit interviews and fieldnotes provided opportunities for me to hear how the women talked about writing and themselves as writers. Based on the analysis of these data, the women did begin to show more confidence in themselves as writers, and also they became more comfortable talking about the process of writing and using the language of writers.

At the beginning of the semester during interviews, the four TRA students usually did not focus on their writing skills. Instead they focused on their content and the personal issues contained in their essays. Even with questions directed at writing and some probing from me, the students still could not discuss their writing skills. As the semester progressed, the women began to focus more on the features of their writing and the techniques that they used to improve their writing. Their answers to interview questions, particularly by the exit interview, revealed that they were more confident with their acquired writing skills and that they had begun to apply the techniques learned in class about good writing. The students had learned the language to talk about their writing and this knowledge increased their confidence in themselves as writers.

Confidence in viewing themselves as writers should help the four TRA students throughout their college careers and also when they begin writing in their workplaces. Self-esteem and confidence are related to improving not only in writing but also other areas of work (Hays, 1999; McGarvey, 1999). Tyler (1999), in her investigation of providing basic skills training for workers, found that improved employee morale and self-esteem was the main

organizational benefit gained through developmental training, including writing (p. 5). Agnew (1992) found that with enhanced skills and knowledge of what it takes to be a good writer, employees (who were previously developmental writers in college) were more likely to meet with success in their workplace writing. Also she described that the confidence of these employees was important in helping them to find success in their workplace writing.

Conclusions from the Study

One of the main conclusions drawn from this study is that participating in developmental writing helped the four TRA students to improve their writing skills. The classroom instruction, opportunity to write multiple essays under different conditions, and chance to work with their peers helped the women in this study to improve their writing skills and to understand how to improve their own writing.

The other conclusion drawn from this study is that during a semester of Developmental Writing 03, the women continued to gain confidence in themselves as writers. The four TRA students were more comfortable talking about themselves as writers and how they tried to improve upon their writing in their essays.

Implications

The four women who participated in this study were devastated by the loss of their sewing jobs in the garment factories. Angie said, "I was scared to death when I started both jobs [sewing at different factories]; and I cried with my co-workers when I left both jobs" (Final exam essay). In the beginning they viewed the loss of their jobs as a negative part of their lives. After doing this study and judging by the women's difference in attitudes from the beginning to the

end of the semester, the women found out after their first semester at the community college that the TRA funding they received for going to college was really a positive occurrence. All four of the women came to really like school and were very excited about learning. They may have never had the opportunity to come to college if their factories had not closed and the government had provided them with TRA funding to come to school.

The community college was also an important place for the women. The community college's mission has always been to provide lifelong learning opportunities and to give those who may have never gone to college "another chance" to attend college. My own previous experiences with the community college environment were minimal. Other than working with a developmental teacher at another regional community college, I had not spent any significant time in the environment before my study. Now I certainly have a strong opinion of the importance of the community college and the crucial role it plays in the lives of its students. The community college environment provided a positive learning environment not only for these women who were attending college for the first time but also for me. It was truly invigorating to be in a classroom with students of all ages and from different backgrounds as they begin their journey to learning new writing skills.

The developmental writing class at the community college also provided positive experiences for the four participants and me. This experience in the developmental writing class was particularly enlightening for me as a writing teacher and researcher since Virginia does not allow developmental writing to be taught in public higher education institutions, the place where my college teaching experience has been. There are often debates in the field of writing and education concerning whether developmental writing should continue to be taught and funded. Participation in developmental writing was successful in helping to prepare the four women in this study for further writing both in the academy and in their future professions. Based on this

study, for students whose writing skills are weak, developmental writing can be a valuable component of their academic course work. Although the women still had room for improvement in their writing skills and their writing skills in usage, mechanics, and grammar do not yet meet the needs of employers, the women should have opportunities to improve on these skills in their further community college writing courses.

Another implication of this study is that the women made strides in their writing toward understanding Standard English better. Based on their Appalachian culture, many errors are indicative of their cultural context, and these forms of dialect and word order often represent Non Standard English. Although the women still needed to improve on their grammar skills and many of their errors still were tied to their Non Standard English errors, they began to better understand how to use Standard English in their writing. Standard English is a necessity for writing both in the academy and in the workplace.

Additionally, participating in developmental writing helped the students improve not only the features of their writing but also their confidence in themselves as writers. Low confidence and self-esteem are often problems for displaced workers and nontraditional students, especially since they have either never been to college or have been away from school for a long time. When provided opportunities to do multiple kinds of writing under different circumstances, students are able to see themselves as successful writers. The success that the students in this study found with their writing helped to improve their confidence as both writers and students. This improvement in confidence will also help the students with their future writing at both the college level and in the long term, the workplace environment. Improving students' confidence is another way that developmental writing can be helpful and contribute to community college students' success.

Recommendations for Future Research

One of the recommendations for further studies would be to follow TRA students through their developmental writing courses and then continue to study them throughout their college writing classes. This further research would be a way to assess the students' continued improvement in writing.

Since the majority of the TRA students' writing weaknesses were in their use of grammar, usage and mechanics, another study could focus specifically on analyzing writing only for these traits of writing. Even with participating in a developmental writing class five days a week, the women still needed improvement in grammar, usage and mechanics. Within another study, not only would the focus be on these skills but also it could address further how these skills could be taught specifically for improving writing in the academy and workplace writing.

Also since the Learning Plus module on editing was included in the classroom expectations, and since it specifically addressed grammar, mechanics usage, a study on how the Learning Plus program helps developmental writing students would be useful for the body of research. This study focused specifically on the women's writing and the traits of their writing, and it was not concerned with how the module the women completed had impacted their learning. It would be particularly important to look at Learning Plus's use with developmental students since most colleges use the program with students who have already completed a freshman writing course (or higher writing course). Another study could look further at how the practice and feedback within Learning Plus either assists or does not assist developmental writers.

Further research could also look into how TRA funded developmental students do in their business writing classes. There have been many studies conducted on how developmental students fare in freshman writing courses, but I was unable to find one that looked at how

students do in their business writing course. This study would be particularly important if it looked specifically at TRA funded developmental students who are required to take business writing as a part of their retraining program. The researcher would need to be sure that the business writing class focused specifically on writing and not just on editing, as some business writing classes at the community college do.

Finally, another study could further verify how TRA students are being prepared for the writing they will do in the workplace. The researcher could develop case studies based on developmental writing students as they enter the workforce and then follow this up by interviewing the students' employers. Employers could be surveyed on how successful former developmental writing students are in their workplace writing.

Conclusion

This study followed four displaced garment workers using TRA funding for retraining at Creekview Community College. I was a participant observer in the Developmental Writing 03 class for the Fall 2000 semester with the students Elsie, Lauren, Angie and Danene. Specifically, the study analyzed the women's in-class, out-of-class revised, and final exam essays to determine if the features of their writing improved as they participated in Dr. Martin's Developmental Writing 03 class. During this study, I also kept a continuing dialogue with the women about themselves as writers, through ongoing interviews and my fieldnotes from the class.

The women's writing improved in the features that employers want and also in the domains representing good writing, as addressed in the two research questions. Additionally, the confidence that the four women had in themselves as writers increased as a result of participating

in a developmental writing class. Their improved writing and confidence should help the women with their future writing both in academia and the workplace.

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*Creekview Community College is a pseudonym, as mentioned before, and the place of the college in the citation is changed as well; this is to protect the identity of the participants of this study.

Appendix A

Bi Weekly Allowance Form

VIRGINIA EMPLOYMENT COMMISSION
BI-WEEKLY REQUEST FOR ALLOWANCES BY WORKER IN TRAINING
TRADE ACT OF 1974

TRAINING WEEKS (TWO):
Beginning Date _____
Ending Date _____

WORKER NAME (First, Middle Initial, Last) | SOCIAL SECURITY NO. | PETITION NO.

MAILING ADDRESS (No., Street, City or County, State, Zip Code) | Please check here if this is a new address ☐

A. TRADE READJUSTMENT ALLOWANCE (To be completed by worker)

	YES	NO	EXPLAIN ALL "YES" ANSWERS
1. HAVE YOU PREVIOUSLY RECEIVED A TRADE READJUSTMENT ALLOWANCE OR ANY OTHER TRAINING ALLOWANCE FOR THE TRAINING WEEKS SHOWN ABOVE, INCLUDING VETERANS EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE, PELL GRANTS OR SUPPLEMENTAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY GRANTS?	☐	☐	NAME OF PROGRAM _____ DATE RECEIVED _____ AMOUNT RECEIVED $ _____ PERIOD COVERED BY ALLOWANCE _____
2. HAVE YOU FILED (OR DO YOU INTEND TO FILE) A CLAIM, OR HAVE YOU RECEIVED UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE UNDER A STATE OR FEDERAL LAW FOR THE TRAINING WEEKS OR ANY PART OF THE TRAINING WEEKS SHOWN ABOVE?	☐	☐	TYPE OF CLAIM _____ PAYING STATE _____ AMOUNT RECEIVED $ _____
3. HAVE YOU WORKED IN EMPLOYMENT OR SELF-EMPLOYMENT DURING THE TRAINING WEEKS SHOWN ABOVE? Week 1	☐	☐	GROSS EARNING PAID WEEK 1 $ _____ NAME AND ADDRESS OF EMPLOYER _____
Week 2	☐	☐	GROSS EARNING PAID WEEK 2 $ _____ NAME AND ADDRESS OF EMPLOYER _____
4. DO YOU RECEIVE A PENSION?	☐	☐	AMOUNT OF PENSION $ _____ per _____

B. WORKER CERTIFICATION

I authorize deduction for absences made to me, if applicable. I give this information to support my request for allowances. The information contained in this request is correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that penalties are provided for willful misrepresentation made to obtain allowances to which I am not entitled.

SIGNATURE OF WORKER | DATE

C. PROGRESS AND ATTENDANCE IN TRAINING (TO be completed by training facility)

	YES	NO	EXPLAIN ALL "NO" ANSWERS
1. FROM THE BEGINNING OF TRAINING AND THROUGH THE TRAINING WEEK SHOWN ABOVE, HAS THIS WORKER MADE SATISFACTORY PROGRESS IN TRAINING?	☐	☐	REASON FOR UNSATISFACTORY PROGRESS _____
a. IF "NO", DID GOOD CAUSE EXIST FOR WORKER'S UNSATISFACTORY PROGRESS IN TRAINING? Normally two consecutive weeks of absences preclude satisfactory progress in training. If absences continue into the third consecutive week of training, termination if mandatory upon the first scheduled day of training (usually Monday) of the third week.	☐	☐	DATE TERMINATED _____ LAST HOUR AND DATE ATTENDED _____
2. DID YOU PROVIDE LODGING AND MEALS TO THIS WORKER DURING THE TRAINING WEEK SHOWN ABOVE?	☐	☐	

3. ATTENDANCE RECORD, ENTER:
P for days present
E for days excused
H for holidays
N for days no training scheduled or conducted
U for unexcused absences

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	No. of Days Training Scheduled
First Week								
Second Week								

Absences are to be considered unexcused until the training facility receives satisfactory evidence, usually in written form, upon which to grant excused absences. Poor attendance, regardless of reasons, adversely affects progress and will at all times be subject to review in considering or terminating training of Trade Act workers.

CONTINUED ON REVERSE

FORM VEC-TAA-2-C (A) (1-82)

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D. TRAINING FACILITY CERTIFICATION

The answers in Part C are in accordance with our records. Statements made by the worker appear to be complete and correct to the best of my knowledge.

NAME OF TRAINING FACILITY	SIGNATURE OF TRAINING OFFICIAL	TELEPHONE #	DATE

MAIL ORIGINAL OF THIS FORM TO:

TRA Payment Unit
Virginia Employment Commission
P.O. Box 2249
Richmond, Virginia 23237-2249

TRAINING FACILITY: Mail Original to above address. Keep a copy for your files.

E. STATE AGENCY DETERMINATION

	AMOUNT AUTHORIZED	PAYMENT ISSUED
TRADE READJUSTMENT ALLOWANCE TYPE_____ (Regular, Increased or reduced types are covered on Page C-IV-18, MA Handbook 385)	$ _____	☐
SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCE (NO. DAYS _____)	$ _____	☐
TRANSPORTATION ALLOWANCE ___ INITIAL ___ TERMINAL ___ DAILY (NO. DAYS _____)	$ _____	☐

REASON FOR DENIAL: _____

SIGNATURE OF TAA REPRESENTATIVE	DATE AUTHORIZED

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Appendix B

TRA Daily Time Sheet

TRA ATTENDANCE FORM

New River Community College

STUDENT'S NAME_____ SOCIAL SECURITY_____

Beginning Date_____-_____-_____ To Ending Date_____-_____-_____

MONDAY			TUESDAY			WEDNESDAY			THURSDAY			FRIDAY			SATURDAY		
Class Starts	Class Ends	Inst. Initial	Class Start	Class Ends	Inst. Initial	Class Starts	Class Ends	Inst. Initial	Class Starts	Class Ends	Inst. Initial	Class Starts	Class Ends	Inst. Initial	Class Starts	Class Ends	Inst. Initial

MONDAY			TUESDAY			WEDNESDAY			THURSDAY			FRIDAY			SATURDAY		
Class Starts	Class Ends	Inst. Initial	Class Starts	Class Ends	Inst. Initial	Class Starts	Class Ends	Inst. Initial	Class Starts	Class Ends	Inst. Initial	Class Starts	Class Ends	Inst. Initial	Class Starts	Class Ends	Inst. Initial

I certify that the above hours are correct_____ _____

Signature of Student Date

d:\tra\attendn3.tra

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Appendix C

Writing Expectations of Employers

Appendix C

Writing Expectations of Employers

1. Demonstration of a writing process approach—to include draft(s), editing, some form of prewriting
2. Organization—organized in a manner that clearly demonstrates logical order
3. Clarity—words, ideas, topics are organized in such a way that the ideas are succinct and clear
4. Thesis—an understanding of a thesis statement is represented and indeed becomes the thesis of the essay
5. Support—in addition to having a thesis, the essay demonstrates relevant support; there are adequate details, but not overly detailed, in order to guide reader/audience; clear examples that are logical for essay
6. Sentence variety—avoids short, choppy sentences; variety of sentences (length and type)
7. Content—sophistication evident; depth; originality; serious thought
8. Editing—evidence that editing of some form has occurred, not only on spell-check on the computer program
9. Grammar/Mechanics—although not necessarily absolutely grammatically and mechanically correct, the essay must demonstrate a good use of Standard English whereas the reader can easily understand the essay and there is no abundance of gross mistakes in the writing (e.g. fragments, run-on's, misspellings, incorrect verb use…)
10. Computer written—clear understanding of formatting and organizing an essay on the computer

*Compiled by Katherine L. Hall and Dr. Martin of Creekview Community College

Appendix D

Developmental Test Scores

Appendix D

COMPASS PLACEMENT TEST

MATH

Pro-Algebra

0-30 Student takes MTH 02 31-36 Student takes MTH 09
37-100 Student takes MTH 03, MTH 120, BUS 121, MKT 116 **Algebra**
0-38 Student takes MTH 03, MTH 120 39-46 Student takes MTH 04, MTH 06
47-99 Student takes MTH 115, MTH 120, BUS 121, MKT 116 **College Algebra**
0-43 Student takes MTH 04, MTH 06, MTH 07
44-99 MTH 151, MTH 152, MTH 163, MTH 157, MTH 241, BUS 221

- Students needing MTH 101 and MTH 103 do not need to take a placement test.
- LPN students will still take a paper and pencil test.

Student takes MTH 02 Student takes MTH 09 Student takes MTH 03, MTH 120, BUS 121, MKT 116
Student takes MTH 03, MTH 120 Student takes MTH 04, MTH 06
Student takes MTH 115, MTH 120, BUS 121, MKT 116

ENGLISH

Reading

0-32 Adult Basic Education 33-64 **ENG** 04 **65-75**
ENG 05 76-80 Decision Zone: Correlation to Writing Score 81-99
ENG III Writing 0-20 Adult Basic Education **21-35** **ENG 01 36-65**
ENG 03 66-75 Decision Zone: Correlation to Writing Score 76-99 **ENG 111**

- **ENG 100** may be taken if student does not need **ENG** 04 or **ENG 01.**
- **A** writing sample is required for ALL students for whom English is not their native language.

As specified by the Department of Education, in order to be eligible for any federal and state financial aid, the minimum qualifying scores for Ability to Benefits are as follows:
Writing Skills-31 Reading--60 -Pre-Algebra-21

*Students not having a high school diploma or GED and scoring below these cut off scores should be referred to the Adult Basic Education office before starting as they will not qualify for financial aid.

ASSET PLACEMENT TEST

ENGLISH

Reading

Raw Score	Scaled Score	
0-6	23-27	Adult Basic Education
7-11	28-33	ENG 04
12-14	34-37	ENG 05
15-17	38-41	Decision Zone: Correlation to Writing Score
18-24	42-55	ENG 111

Writing

Raw Score	Scaled Score	
0-13	23-30	Adult Basic Education
14-20	31-35	ENG 01
21-26	36-40	ENG 03
27-28	41-42	Decision Zone: Writing Sample Required
29-36	43-55	ENG 111

Appendix E

Teacher Consent Form

Appendix E

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

Informed Consent for Teachers

Title of Project: **Trade Readjustment Act Women in Developmental Writing: Preparing for Education and Retraining**

Investigators: **Katherine L. Hall, Dr. Patricia Kelly (Advisor)**

I. The purpose of this Research/Project

The purpose of this study is to study Trade Readjustment Act (TRA) women as they go through a semester of Developmental Writing at the community college. Given that these women/students represent a special population with varying needs, it is important to look at how they become better readers and writers in their Trade Readjustment Act programs' community college developmental writing training.

II. Procedures

I would like to observe your class and record fieldnotes on a regular basis throughout the fall semester. I may ask clarification questions before and after class periods or ask your opinion on relevant issues/situations that arise. Additionally, I am asking you to share any materials that you feel are relevant to this study and also writing samples that the students produce.

III. Risks

The observations, interviews, and review of materials are not designed to cause any risks or discomforts. A relevant risk for your participation is that administrators may read the final dissertation and know what is taught and said in your class; this may occur since they are aware that I am working in your class. The final writing will deal with sensitive issues in a manner that is non-threatening and non-accusatory. If any concerns on your part arise, please feel free to talk to me or contact me immediately.

IV. Benefits of this Project

I cannot promise you any personal benefits, but the findings of this study may provide insight into the progress and accomplishments of the TRA students in your developmental class.

V. **Extent of Anonymity and Confidentiality**

I will refer to you in notes, fieldnotes, and the final findings of this study with a pseudonym. Nothing I might write based on this data will attribute quotations or statements to you or any other participants by name. As I write up this study, I will store notes and handouts in a secure location to which no one but project investigators will

have access, and I will destroy them when the project ends. You should be aware, however, that my use of pseudonyms does not necessarily guarantee you anonymity.

VI. Compensation

Other than my sincere appreciation, there is no compensation for participation in this project.

VII. Freedom to Withdraw

You can stop your participation in this study at any time by telling me that you do not want to provide any further interviews or handouts. You do not have to answer any of my questions. If you have any questions about the conduct of the research, you may contact any one of the individuals listed at the end of this form.

VIII. Approval of Research

This research project has been approved, as required, by the Institutional Review Board for Research Involving Human Subjects at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, by the Department of Teaching and Learning.

IX. Your Permission

I have read and understand the Informed Consent form and conditions of this project. I have had all of my questions answered. I hereby acknowledge the above and give my voluntary consent for participation in this project. I have been offered a copy of this form to keep.

If I participate, I may withdraw at any time without penalty. I agree to abide by the rules of this project.

Signature Date

Should I have any questions about this research or its conduct, I may contact:

Investigators' Phone/Contact Information

Katherine L. Hall
540-951-7654
kahall2@vt.edu
Dr. Patricia Kelly, Advisor
Center for Teacher Education
225-C War Memorial Hall
Virginia Tech
Blacksburg, VA 24061-0313
Kellyp@vt.edu
Fax: 540-231-9075
Office: 540-231-5174
David Moore
Chair, IRB
Research Division
540-231-4991
moored@vt.edu

Appendix F

Institutional Review Board Approval

Virginia Tech
VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

Institutional Review Board
Dr. David M. Moore
IRB (Human Subjects) Chair
Assistant Vice Provost for Research Compliance
CVM Phase II - Duckpond Dr., Blacksburg, VA 24061-0442
Office: 540/231-4991; FAX: 540/231-6033
e-mail: moored@vt.edu

13 September, 2000

MEMORANDUM

TO: Katherine L. Hall
Curriculum and Instruction

FROM: David M. Moore

SUBJECT: IRB EXEMPTION APPROVAL – "Trade Readjustment Act women in developmental Writing:Preparing for Education and Retraining" – IRB #00-301

I have reviewed your request to the IRB for exemption for the above referenced project. I concur that the research falls within the exempt status. Approval is granted effective as of the date of this memorandum.

cc: Jan Nespor

A Land-Grant University—The Commonwealth Is Our Campus
An Equal Opportunity / Affirmative Action Institution

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Appendix G

Developmental Writing 03 Course Plan

Appendix G

COURSE PLAN

Course Number and Title: **ENG 03 - Preparing for College Writing**

Prepared by English Faculty (Instructor) Fall, 2000 **(Date)**

Approved by: (Division Chairman) **Fall,** 2000 **(Date)**

I. Course Description

Emphasizes strategies within the writing process to help students with specific writing situations. Develops techniques
to improve clarity of writing and raise **proficiency** to the level necessary for entrance into particular curricula. **(05** credits)

II. Introduction

ENG 03 is designed primarily to provide developmental instruction in basic composition for students entering ENG III
or ENG 1 15. This class emphasizes using an effective writing process for the development of paragraphs and short
essays.

III. **Specific** Objectives

In ENG 03 the student will be asked to demonstrate in tests and writing assignments knowledge of the following:

1. Concepts taught in ENG 01 (basic grammar, punctuation, and sentence skills)

2. Paragraph and essay structure which includes clear, effective sentences

3. Unity and coherence within paragraphs and essays

4. Adequate support of topic sentences and thesis statements through examples, narration. and description

5. Standard English

0475:WP6/CP:8/7/0:bjg(smm): 1

IV. Instructional Procedures

Instructional procedures will include lecture, group work, and computer-assisted instruction, as well as individualized instruction through student-teacher conferences and scheduled appointments in the CVCC Writing Center.

V. Required Materials

College Writing Skills with Readings, 5th ed., by John Langan
Computer diskette - **31/2** inch

VI. Evaluation

The course grade will be determined as follows:

Students will be given pre- and post-tests. By the end of the semester, using standard English, the student must be able to write a three-paragraph essay free of major errors, approximately 30-50 sentences. This essay will be evaluated by a committee of English faculty members. In addition, the student must show 75 % mastery on the **post-test.** The final grade will be determined by the individual instructor..

30%--Daily assignments (including assignments using Learning Plus software)
50%--Major tests and compositions (including essays, journal assignments, in-class writings, or a combination)
20%--Comprehensive and final exam

VII. Grading Scale

S = Satisfactory
U = Unsatisfactory

An "R" grade will be given to students who are making satisfactory progress but who need more time to master the course objectives.

Policy for Withdrawal

Student Initiated Withdrawal Policy

A student may drop or withdraw from a class without academic penalty during the first sixty percent (60%) of a session. For purposes of enrollment reporting, the following procedures apply:

1. If a student withdraws from a class prior to the termination of the add/drop period for the session, the student will be removed from the class roll and no grade will be awarded.

2. After the add/drop period, but prior to completion of sixty percent (60 % of a session, a student who withdraws or is
withdrawn from a course will be assigned a grade of "W."

3. After that time, if a student withdraws from a class, a grade of "F" will be assigned.

A student may be awarded, retroactively, a grade of "W", if and only if, the student would have been eligible under
the previously stated policy to receive a "W" on the last date that he/she attended class.

1. The student must appeal for a grade of "W" based on attendance.

2. The Admissions and Records staff will collect the relevant documentation for the appeal, including the last date of attendance, from the instructor of the course that is being appealed and other relevant documentation when mitigating circumstances are to be considered. For an appeal related to a distance education course (IDL), the last date that work was submitted will be considered the last date of attendance.

3. All relevant documentation will be reviewed by the Director of Student Development and the withdrawal policy strictly applied in determination of changing the grade to "W."

4. If the student ceased attending class during the first 60 percent of the semester, a grade of "W" will be given. If the last date of attendance falls beyond the sixty percent mark, the student must demonstrate mitigating circumstances and must have been passing before a grade of "W" will be awarded.

5. Appeals asserting mitigating circumstances must be further reviewed by and a determination made by a committee of faculty appointed by the Dean of Instruction and Student Services.

A grade of withdrawal implies that the student was making satisfactory progress in the class at the time of withdrawal, or that the withdrawal was officially made before the deadline date published in the college calendar, or that the student was administratively transferred to a different program.

Instructor Initiated Withdrawal Policy

A student who adds a class or registers after the first day of class is counted absent from all class meetings missed. Each instructor is responsible for keeping a record of student attendance in each class.

Students who have not attended class by the last day to drop class and receive refund must be deleted by the instructor during the following week. No refund will be applicable.

When a student's absences total the equivalent of twice the number of weekly meetings of a class of a regular semester
(i.e., 500 minutes), the student may be dropped for unsatisfactory attendance in the class by the instructor.

When an instructor determines that absences constitute unsatisfactory attendance, a Faculty Withdrawal Form should be completed and submitted to the Admissions and Records Office. The last date of attendance must be documented. A grade of "W" will be recorded during the first sixty percent(60%) period of a course. Students withdrawn after the sixty percent(60%) period will receive a grade of "F" except under mitigating circumstances, which must be documented. A copy of this documentation must be placed in the student's academic file.

The student will be notified of the withdrawal by the Admissions and Records Office. An appeal for reinstatement into the class may be approved only by the instructor.

IX. Attendance

Students are expected to attend classes regularly and are responsible for making up any work missed.

X. Cheating Policy

Any student found cheating on an assignment will receive a grade of zero for that assignment with no opportunity to make it up. Cheating includes:

A. Giving or receiving information pertaining to tests.

B. Receiving any unauthorized assistance on an assigned writing assignment.

C. Plagiarizing, which is defined as taking and using as one's own the writings or ideas of another.

Appendix H

Consent Form for Students

Appendix H

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

Informed Consent for Students

Title of Project: **Trade Readjustment Act Women in Developmental Writing: Preparing for Education and Retraining**

Investigators: **Katherine L. Hall, Dr. Patricia Kelly (Advisor)**

I. The purpose of this Research/Project

The purpose of this study is to study Trade Readjustment Act (TRA) women as they go through a semester of Developmental Writing at the community college. Given that you represent a unique population with varying needs, it is important to see how you develop into better readers and writers in the developmental writing program.

II. Procedures

I would like to observe your class and take notes on a regular basis throughout the fall semester. I may ask some general questions before and after class periods or I may ask your opinion on relevant issues that arise. Additionally, I am asking to read and utilize your writings in my study.

III. Risks

The observations, interviews, and review of materials are not designed to cause any risks or discomforts. Although your instructor knows you are participating in this study, it will not affect your grades or the teacher's opinion of you. Also, the teacher will not read your comments until after this class is done, so there is no threat for answering questions honestly. If any concerns on your part arise, please feel free to talk to me or contact me immediately.

IV. Benefits of this Project

I cannot promise you any personal benefits, but the findings of this study may provide insight into the progress and accomplishments of the TRA students (you) in your developmental class.

V. Extent of Anonymity and Confidentiality

I will refer to you in notes, fieldnotes, and the final findings of this study with a pseudonym (different name). Nothing I might write based on this data will attribute quotations or statements to you or any other participants by name. As I write up this study, I will store notes and handouts in a secure location to which no one but project investigators will have access, and I will destroy them when the project ends. You

should be aware, however, that my use of pseudonyms does not necessarily guarantee you anonymity.

VI. Compensation

Other than my sincere appreciation, there is no compensation for participation in this project.

VII. Freedom to Withdraw

You can stop your participation in this study at any time by telling me that you do not want to participate any longer. You do not have to answer any of my questions. If you have any questions about the conduct of the research, you may contact any one of the individuals listed at the end of this form.

VIII. Approval of Research

This research project has been approved, as required, by the Institutional Review Board for Research Involving Human Subjects at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, by the Department of Teaching and Learning.

IX. Your Permission

I have read and understand the Informed Consent form and conditions of this project. I have had all of my questions answered. I hereby acknowledge the above and give my voluntary consent for participation in this project. I have been offered a copy of this form to keep.

If I participate, I may withdraw at any time without penalty. I agree to abide by the rules of this project.

Signature Date

Should I have any questions about this research or its conduct, I may contact:

Investigators' Phone/Contact Information

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Appendix I

Scoring Rubrics

Appendix I

From Virginia Department of Education. (1999). The Virginia SOL writing tests: A teacher's resource notebook for enhancing writing instruction and improving scores on the state assessments. Richmond, VA: Office of Secondary Instructional Services.

Composing Rubric

Score Point 4

The writer demonstrates consistent, though not necessarily perfect, control of the **composing domain's** features. The piece is generally unified in that all of the parts contribute to the creation of a dominant impression or idea. The sharply focused central idea is fully, but not exhaustively, elaborated with key examples, illustrations, reasons, events, or details. In all successful responses, layers of elaboration are present. Surface signals, like transitions, logically connect their respective statements into the whole of the paper. In all types of writing, a strong organizational plan is apparent. Any minor organizational lapses that occur do not significantly detract from the presentation. The writing provides evidence of unity by exhibiting a consistent point of view (e.g., not switching from 'I" to "you"), a lack of digressions, appropriate transitions both within paragraphs and across the entire piece, the presence of careful logic, and a strong lead and closure.

Score Point 3

The writer demonstrates reasonable, but not consistent, control of the **composing domain's** features; the writer may control some features more than others. The clearly focused central idea is purposefully elaborated with key examples, illustrations, reasons, events, or details. Occasionally, some thinness or unevenness in elaboration may occur. In all types of writing, an organizational plan is apparent. Any minor organizational lapses that occur do not significantly detract from the piece. Although there may be occasional lapses in coherence or cohesiveness, unity is evidenced by the fact that few, if any, digressions or shifts in point of view occur. Transitions are, on the whole, appropriate. The opening and closing show some skill, but not the sophistication of a 4 performance.

Score Point 2

The writer demonstrates inconsistent control of several features, indicating significant weakness in the **composing domain.** At this score point, ideas often compete, or no one idea emerges as central. Even if a single idea dominates, the paper may lack focus because of little or no elaboration. The paper may be a list of general, underdeveloped statements or the skeleton of a narrative. In the case of persuasive writing, it may consist of a few uncollaborated reasons accompanied by inappropriate attempts (begging, pleading, negotiating) to persuade. Typically,

the writer extends ideas with a few brief details and moves on, though chunks of irrelevant material may appear as well. Often, no more than a hint of organization is apparent. Even though an opening and closing may be present, the lack of a logically elaborated central idea prevents unity from emerging.

Score Point I

The writer demonstrates little or no control of most of the **composing domain's** features. The focus on a central idea is lacking, or the piece is so sparse that the presence of a clear focus is insufficient for it to earn a higher score. Typically, the writing jumps from point to point, without a unifying central idea. No overall organizational strategy is apparent. The writing seems haphazard, and sentences can be rearranged without substantially changing the meaning. Bare statement is the norm, but even in responses that are several pages long, no purposeful elaboration is present.

Usage/Mechanics Rubric

Score Point 4

The writer demonstrates consistent, though not necessarily perfect, control of the domain's features of **usage/mechanics.** The writing demonstrates a thorough understanding of usage and mechanics as specified in the Virginia K-11 SOL. The author uses capitalization, punctuation, usage, and sentence formation and applies the structural principles of spelling. A few errors in usage and mechanics may be present. However, the writer's control of the domain's many features **is** too strong for these mistakes to detract from the performance.

Score Point 3

The writer demonstrates reasonable, but not consistent, control of most of the dominant features of **usage/mechanics.** The writing demonstrates a basic understanding of usage and mechanics as specified in the Virginia K-11 SOL. For the most part, the author appropriately applies both the rules of capitalization, punctuation, usage, and sentence formation and the structural principles of spelling expected of high school students. Most of the errors contained in the piece are not elementary ones.

Score Point 2

The writer demonstrates inconsistent control of several features, indicating significant weakness in the domain of **usage/mechanics.** Evidence of the author's knowledge of features of this domain appears - alongside frequent errors. In terms of both usage and mechanics, the writer inconsistently applies the rules of capitalization, punctuation, usage, spelling, and sentence formation as specified in the Virginia K-1 I

SOL. Often, these papers exhibit a lack of control of tense consistency, meaningful punctuation, and the principles of spelling, thus making it difficult for the reader to follow the writer's thought. The density of errors that emerges across features outweighs the feature control present in the paper.

Score **Point I**

The writer demonstrates little or no control of most of the domain's features of **usage/mechanics.** Frequent and severe errors in the Virginia K-1 I usage and mechanics SOL distract the reader and make the writing very hard to understand. Even when meaning is not significantly affected, the density and variety of errors overwhelm the performance and keep it from meeting minimum standards of competence.

Written Expression Rubric

Score Point 4

The writer demonstrates consistent, though not necessarily perfect, control of the **written expression domain's** features. The **result** is a purposefully crafted message that the reader remembers, primarily because its precise information and vocabulary resonate as images in the reader's mind. Highly specific word choice and information also create a purposeful tone in the writing and enhance the writer's voice. If metaphors, similes, personification, or other examples of figurative language are present, they are appropriate to the purpose of the piece. The writer repeats or varies sentence construction for effect and appropriately subordinates ideas and embeds modifiers on a regular basis, resulting in a rhythmic flow throughout the piece.

Score Point 3

The writer demonstrates reasonable, but not consistent, control of the **written expression domain's** features. On the whole, specific word choice and information cause the message to be clear; occasionally, a few examples of vivid or purposefully figurative language may be present. Along with instances of successful control, some general statements or vague words may be present, flattening the tone and voice of the piece somewhat. Overall, the writing is characterized by a smooth rhythm created by the effective use of normal word order and competent variation in sentence length and complexity. An occasional awkward construction or the lack of structural complexity is not distracting.

Score Point 2

The writer demonstrates inconsistent control of several features, indicating significant weakness in the **written expression domain.** Some specificity of word choice might exist, but generally the piece is written in imprecise, bland language. As a result, the writer's voice rarely emerges. The selection of information may be uneven and/or consist of an attempt to tell everything that the writer knows about a topic. A relative lack of sentence variety may make reading monotonous, and occasional awkward constructions may be distracting enough to make the writer's meaning unclear. While a few brief rhythmic clusters of sentences may occur, an overall sense of rhythmic flow is not present.

Score Point I

The writer demonstrates little or no control of most of the **written expression domain's** features. Both word choice and information are general, vague, and/or repetitive. A lack of sentence variety makes the presentation monotonous. The existence of several extremely awkward constructions reduces the paper's stylistic effect. The writer's lack of control of vocabulary and information prevents both tone and voice from emerging.

Sentence Formation, Usage, and Mechanics Skills

Listed below are skills in the areas of sentence formation, usage, and mechanics (capitalization, punctuation, formatting, and spelling) which may be addressed on both the multiple-choice and the direct-writing components of the secondary English writing test. This list is not intended to be exhaustive but to provide examples of the skills which may be addressed on the secondary English writing test.

Standard Sentence Formation

Use complete sentences. Avoid comma splices.
Avoid fused sentences (run-ons). Avoid dangling modifiers.

Usage

Correct use of
subject-verb agreement pronoun case
pronoun reference
pronoun antecedent agreement adjective comparisons adverb comparisons
adverbs instead of adjectives where appropriate

- verb tense inflections such as -ed or use of helping verbs • possessives (singular and plural)
- plural inflections (-s, -es, irregular forms)
- negatives (includes avoidance of double negatives) • frequently confused words (e.g., accept/except) • homophones
- active/passive voice

Maintain consistent point of view. (In direct writing, a shift in the writer's point of view is scored in composing- a shift in person is considered a usage error as shown in the following sentence: "School

is important to students; you have to do well to get a good job.') Maintain tense consistency.

Avoid common usage problems. Avoid faulty parallelism.

Mechanics: Punctuation

Correct use of:
colons
commas in dates, series, addresses
commas around interrupters (including but not limited to appositives) commas and semicolons in sentence types punctuation of dialogue
commas with certain clauses
apostrophes in contractions and possessives quotation marks around dialogue and titles italics or underlining as appropriate letter parts

Mechanics: Capitalization

Correct capitalization of:

proper nouns and adjectives
academic subjects and classes (e.g., history, sophomore) title of works

Mechanics: Format

Indent paragraphs or double space between them. Paragraph dialogue correctly.
Divide words between syllables with a hyphen at end of line.

Mechanics: Spelling

Spell frequently used and common words correctly.

Appendix J

Sample Primary Trait Scored Paper

INGIE

Alzheimer's in my family

For some reason I think all mothers are mind readers. Maybe it's because they always know what to say when you're hurt or somebody hurts your feelings. They never forget your birthday or anybody else in the family. They have a way about reminding you of what you are forgetting, most of the time before we forget it. My mom seems to be a professional at reading my mind and knowing what I'm going to do before I even do it. Maybe that's why watching her own mother die from Alzheimer's was one of the hardest things she ever had to do. It made her believe death was a kind thing in the end for her own mom.

modifier (2)

consistency in pronouns (2)

FLOW IS AWKWARD (3)

(1) some digression

Before my grandmother got sick she raised six children, then after her children were grown she remarried and operated a little country store in Allisonia Va. called WW Turmans. It was small and had candy, soda, washing powders, bread, eggs, soap, a few cooking supplies, dog food, and hog feed. She never had a calculator; she did the books in her head. She even held the position of church secretary for over 20 years. However, in 1995 she was diagnosed with Alzheimer's. Because of this terrible disease, grandma had to go into a nursing home where she lived for two years until her death.

run-on (2)

(1) detracts a bit from the presentation

= (2)

My mom went every day to that nursing home for the two years that grandma was there. Bad weather didn't even keep her away. Mom never stopped hoping or praying that it would slow down or not take her mother's mind completely. I guess the part that put my mom at ease, because there are no easy parts, was that my grandmother

[2] = (1) good i ustrations

BLAND LANGUAGE (3)

VOICE WEAK (3)

Scores:

(1) Composing: 3
(2) Usage/Mechanics: 3
(3) Written Expression: 2

FLH

never became violent. She did try to leave the nursing home onetime before she lost the ability to speak; she told them she had to "go home, fix supper, and wash some school clothes for the kids." At that time her youngest kid was 47 years old. Luckily enough for us all, the counselor talked her into coming back to her room. They finally had to stop putting a napkin on grandma's tray, because she didn't know enough not to eat it. Mom cried every time she left the nursing home. She said her own mother didn't know who she was and didn't know any of her very own children. I still remember my older sister, Deborah, telling mom the morning grandma died to "take comfort in the fact that grandma would know her now."

Mom told the three of her own girls a few years later when we took her back to visit the graveyard that "sometimes death is kinder than what we become in the very end." My sisters and I watch mom closely as the years add up on her, because we think our own mother is starting to show ~~sips~~ signs of this terrible mind erasing disease.

Note: The numbers on comments correspond to each of the rubrics. The errors marked by the researcher correspond to the numbers of the rubric's content (1, 2, or 3).

Appendix K

Exit Interview

Appendix K

Hello Everyone—

I wanted to fill in some of the details for what we will talk about at our meeting on Friday. We are going to look together at your writing one more time. In fact, all of your writing for this semester will be the subject of the questions this time, not just the essay you are working on as in our past talks.

I would ask that you bring all of your writing with you to the meeting and, if possible, print copies that have not been marked on by the professor.

I will ask you some questions, like before, and I would like you to be able to look at your writing to help you develop your responses. Additionally, I will give you the questions today, so that you may begin thinking about what you would like to talk about when we meet on Friday, December 15.

Attached to this letter you will find the questions. I want you to know that this is a non-graded assignment and that I will not share the answers to your questions with your professor until she reads my final paper.

So, I look forward to getting together with you all on Friday. Good luck during your exams and last week of class!

Sincerely,

Katherine

Appendix K

Reflections on Writing/Exit Interview Questions

1. How do you feel your writing has most improved this semester?

2. What three things are you most confident about in your writing?

3. What do you feel is still the hardest thing for you in your writing?

4. What do you now feel is the most important aspect (part) of writing?

5. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about you and your writing?

*Feel free to write down some responses to the questions in advance although I will ask you these questions again when we meet.

Appendix L

Learning Plus Scores

Writing Instruction Individual Report

te Range 01/01/93 12/07/00

Student: [redacted]
Report Date: 12/07/00

Lesson Range: Unit Lsn Act

	Date Started	Date Last Used	Time Spent hrs:min	Est. Time to Complete Strongly Advised and Advised Units	Points Correct	Points Possible	% Score
Course Summary	09/18/00	11/28/00	9:56	11-22 hrs.	478	658	73%

Progress Report

Units/Lessons/Activities	Skills Profile†	Date Started	Date Last Used Completed	Time Spent hrs:min	Est. Time Remaining hrs:min	Points Correct	Points Possible	Score: % or Rating
4 Edit: Grammar, Usage, Punct.		09/18/00	11/28/00	9:56	:15-:30	478	658	73%
1 Fragments		10/06/00	11/02/00	1:45		7	12	58%
1 Fragments		11/02/00	11/02/00	:13		13	14	93%
1 Fragments		11/15/00	11/15/00	:05		8	12	67%
1 Fragments		11/15/00	11/15/00	:04		11	14	79%
1 Fragments		11/15/00	11/15/00	:04		7	12	58%
1 Fragments		11/28/00	11/28/00	:02				
2 Run-ons & Comma Splices		11/02/00	11/02/00	:06		8	8	100%
2 Run-ons & Comma Splices		10/31/00	11/01/00	:40		5	7	71%
2 Run-ons & Comma Splices		11/01/00	11/01/00	:13		5	8	63%
2 Run-ons & Comma Splices		10/31/00	10/31/00	:09		5	8	63%
2 Run-ons & Comma Splices		11/02/00	11/02/00	:08		5	7	71%
3 Misplaced & Dangling Mod.		09/18/00	11/03/00	:10		7	7	100%
4 Parallel Structure		11/03/00	11/03/00	:18		6	7	86%
5 Conjunctions		11/03/00	11/03/00	:04		6	7	86%
5 Conjunctions		11/28/00	11/28/00	:07		3	5	60%
5 Conjunctions		11/28/00	11/28/00	:04		5	7	71%
5 Conjunctions		11/28/00	11/28/00	:06		4	5	80%
5 Conjunctions		11/28/00	11/28/00	:08		7	7	100%
6 Verbs		11/03/00	11/03/00	:04		5	7	71%
6 Verbs		11/16/00	11/16/00	:09		5	7	71%
6 Verbs		11/16/00	11/16/00	:04		6	6	100%
6 Verbs		11/03/00	11/03/00	:05		5	6	83%
7 Double Negatives		11/03/00	11/03/00	:07		6	9	67%
7 Double Negatives		11/03/00	11/03/00	:05		7	7	100%
7 Double Negatives		11/03/00	11/03/00	:13		6	9	67%
7 Double Negatives		11/03/00	11/03/00	:04		4	7	57%
8 Pronouns		11/16/00	11/16/00	:02		5	6	83%
8 Pronouns		11/16/00	11/16/00	:02		6	6	100%
8 Pronouns		11/06/00	11/06/00	:05		5	6	83%
8 Pronouns		11/03/00	11/03/00	:10		5	6	83%
8 Pronouns		11/03/00	11/06/00	:09		3	6	50%
8 Pronouns		11/16/00	11/16/00	:05		4	6	67%
8 Pronouns		11/16/00	11/16/00	:02		5	6	83%
9 Adjectives & Adverbs		11/06/00	11/06/00	:09		6	7	86%

† S = Strongly Advised
A = Advised
O = Optional

1

Essay Rating: VG = Very Good
OK = Okay
NW = Needs Work

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Writing Instruction Individual Report

Student: [redacted]

Report Date: 11/30/00

ate Range: 01/01/93 11/30/00

Lesson Range: Unit Lsn Act

Course Summary

Date Started	Date Last Used	Time Spent hrs:min	Est. Time to Complete Strongly Advised and Advised Units	Points Correct	Points Possible	% Score
09/14/00	11/29/00	5:50	11-22 hrs.	418	596	70%

Progress Report

Units/Lessons/Activities	Skills Profile†	Date Started	Date Last Used Completed	Time Spent hrs:min	Est. Time Remaining hrs:min	Points Correct	Points Possible	Score: % or Rating
4 Edit: Grammar, Usage, Punct.	S	09/14/00	11/29/00	5:50	:30-1:00	418	596	70%
1 Fragments		09/14/00	09/14/00	:15		6	12	50%
1 Fragments		09/14/00	09/14/00	:30		13	14	93%
1 Fragments		09/18/00	09/18/00	:08		7	12	58%
1 Fragments		09/18/00	10/06/00	:18		12	14	86%
2 Run-ons & Comma Splices		10/06/00	10/31/00	:10		4	8	50%
2 Run-ons & Comma Splices		10/31/00	10/31/00	:05		5	7	71%
2 Run-ons & Comma Splices		11/01/00	11/01/00	:05		3	8	38%
2 Run-ons & Comma Splices		11/01/00	11/01/00	:03		5	7	71%
2 Run-ons & Comma Splices		11/01/00	11/01/00	:03		5	8	63%
2 Run-ons & Comma Splices		11/01/00	11/01/00	:02		4	7	57%
2 Run-ons & Comma Splices		11/01/00	11/01/00	:02		6	8	75%
2 Run-ons & Comma Splices		11/01/00	11/01/00	:02		5	7	71%
2 Run-ons & Comma Splices		11/01/00	11/01/00	:03		6	8	75%
2 Run-ons & Comma Splices		11/01/00	11/01/00	:03		6	7	86%
3 Misplaced & Dangling Mod.		10/31/00	10/31/00	:04		9	12	75%
3 Misplaced & Dangling Mod.		11/01/00	11/01/00	:03		5	7	71%
3 Misplaced & Dangling Mod.		10/31/00	10/31/00	:03		7	12	58%
3 Misplaced & Dangling Mod.		10/31/00	10/31/00	:06		6	7	86%
3 Misplaced & Dangling Mod.		10/31/00	10/31/00	:10		3	7	43%
3 Misplaced & Dangling Mod.		11/03/00	11/28/00	:03				
4 Parallel Structure		11/01/00	11/01/00	:03		3	5	60%
4 Parallel Structure		11/01/00	11/01/00	:04		1	7	14%
4 Parallel Structure		11/01/00	11/01/00	:03		2	5	40%
4 Parallel Structure		11/01/00	11/02/00	:06		1	7	14%
4 Parallel Structure		11/02/00	11/02/00	:04		1	5	20%
4 Parallel Structure		11/02/00	11/02/00	:03		2	7	29%
4 Parallel Structure		11/02/00	11/02/00	:05		4	5	80%
4 Parallel Structure		11/01/00	11/01/00	:09		0	7	0%
4 Parallel Structure		11/16/00	11/16/00	:06		5	7	71%
4 Parallel Structure		11/16/00	11/16/00	:03		4	5	80%
4 Parallel Structure		11/16/00	11/16/00	:02		7	7	100%
5 Conjunctions		11/02/00	11/02/00	:04		2	7	29%
5 Conjunctions		11/02/00	11/02/00	:03		4	5	80%
5 Conjunctions		11/16/00	11/16/00	:06		4	7	57%

† S = Strongly Advised
A = Advised
O = Optional

Essay Rating: VG = Very Good
OK = Okay
NW = Needs Work

1

Angie's Scores

96 15

Writing Instruction Individual Report

Date Range: 01/01/93 11/29/00

Student: [redacted]

Report Date: 11/29/00

Lesson Range: Unit Lsn Act

	Date Started	Date Last Used	Time Spent hrs:min	Est. Time to Complete Strongly Advised and Advised Units	Points Correct	Points Possible	% Score
Course Summary				10-21 hrs			

Progress Report

Units/Lessons/Activities	Skills Profile†	Date Started	Date Last Used/ Completed	Time Spent hrs:min	Est. Time Remaining hrs:min	Points Correct	Points Possible	Score: % or Rating
4 Edit: Grammar, Usage, Punct.		**09/18/00**	**11/29/00**	**6:04**	**Completed**	**304**	**375**	**81%**
1 Fragments		09/18/00	10/06/00	:22		8	12	67%
1 Fragments		10/06/00	10/06/00	:09		11	14	79%
1 Fragments		10/31/00	10/31/00	:26		9	12	75%
1 Fragments		10/31/00	10/31/00	:15		13	14	93%
2 Run-ons & Comma Splices		11/01/00	11/01/00	:09		5	8	63%
2 Run-ons & Comma Splices		11/01/00	11/01/00	:06		5	7	71%
2 Run-ons & Comma Splices		11/01/00	11/01/00	:05		6	8	75%
2 Run-ons & Comma Splices		11/02/00	11/02/00	:05		5	7	71%
2 Run-ons & Comma Splices		11/02/00	11/02/00	:04		4	8	50%
2 Run-ons & Comma Splices		11/02/00	11/02/00	:06		7	7	100%
3 Misplaced & Dangling Mod.		11/01/00	11/02/00	:47		7	7	100%
4 Parallel Structure		11/02/00	11/02/00	:09		7	7	100%
5 Conjunctions		11/03/00	11/03/00	:24		5	7	71%
5 Conjunctions		11/03/00	11/03/00	:05		3	5	60%
5 Conjunctions		11/03/00	11/03/00	:05		7	7	100%
5 Conjunctions		11/28/00	11/28/00	:14		3	5	60%
5 Conjunctions		11/28/00	11/28/00	:04		6	7	86%
6 Verbs		11/03/00	11/03/00	:18		6	7	86%
6 Verbs		11/28/00	11/28/00	:04		5	6	83%
6 Verbs		11/28/00	11/28/00	:04		7	7	100%
7 Double Negatives		11/28/00	11/29/00	:07		9	9	100%
8 Pronouns		11/29/00	11/29/00	:01		6	6	100%
9 Adjectives & Adverbs		11/29/00	11/29/00	:23		4	7	57%
9 Adjectives & Adverbs		11/29/00	11/29/00	:07		6	9	67%
9 Adjectives & Adverbs		11/29/00	11/29/00	:02		7	7	100%
10 Comparison Forms		11/29/00	11/29/00	:11		4	5	80%
10 Comparison Forms		11/29/00	11/29/00	04		7	8	88%
11 Commas		11/29/00	11/29/00	:03		7	7	100%
1 Introductory Elements		11/29/00	11/29/00	:04		9	12	75%
2 Interrupting Words		11/29/00	11/29/00	:05		10	12	83%
2 Interrupting Words		11/29/00	11/29/00	:02		11	12	92%
2 Interrupting Words		11/29/00	11/29/00	:02		5	6	83%
3 Items In a Series								

† S = Strongly Advised
A = Advised
O = Optional

Essay Rating: VG = Very Good
OK = Okay
NW = Needs Work

1

219

Writing Instruction Individual Report

ate Range: 01/01/93 11/30/00

Student: [redacted]

Report Date: 11/30/00

Lesson Range: Unit Lsn Act

Course Summary

Date Started	Date Last Used	Time Spent hrs:min	Est. Time to Complete Strongly Advised and Advised Units	Points Correct	Points Possible	% Score
09/14/00	11/29/00	5:05	11-22 hrs.	446	626	71%

Progress Report

Units/Lessons/Activities	Skills Profile†	Date Started	Date Last Used/ Completed	Time Spent hrs:min	Est. Time Remaining hrs:min	Points Correct	Points Possible	Score: % or Rating
4 Edit: Grammar, Usage, Punct.	S	09/14/00	11/29/00	5:05	:30-1:00	446	626	71%
1 Fragments		09/14/00	09/14/00	:33		7	12	58%
1 Fragments		09/14/00	09/14/00	:09		9	14	64%
1 Fragments		10/31/00	10/31/00	:04		8	12	67%
1 Fragments		11/01/00	11/01/00	:05		9	14	64%
1 Fragments		11/01/00	11/01/00	:02		7	12	58%
1 Fragments		11/01/00	11/01/00	:04		12	14	86%
2 Run-ons & Comma Splices		09/14/00	09/18/00	:10		6	8	75%
2 Run-ons & Comma Splices		09/18/00	09/18/00	:04		6	7	86%
3 Misplaced & Dangling Mod.		11/01/00	11/01/00	:04		9	12	75%
3 Misplaced & Dangling Mod.		10/06/00	10/06/00	:05		5	12	42%
3 Misplaced & Dangling Mod.		10/06/00	10/06/00	:07		4	7	57%
3 Misplaced & Dangling Mod.		10/31/00	11/01/00	:06		5	7	71%
3 Misplaced & Dangling Mod.		11/02/00	11/02/00	:01		7	7	100%
4 Parallel Structure		10/06/00	10/06/00	:04		6	7	86%
5 Conjunctions		10/06/00	10/06/00	:01		4	5	80%
5 Conjunctions		10/31/00	10/31/00	:09		5	7	71%
5 Conjunctions		10/31/00	10/31/00	:02		4	5	80%
5 Conjunctions		10/31/00	10/31/00	:02		4	7	57%
5 Conjunctions		10/31/00	11/07/00	:49		3	5	60%
5 Conjunctions		10/06/00	10/06/00	:03		3	7	43%
5 Conjunctions		11/07/00	11/07/00	:02		5	7	71%
5 Conjunctions		11/07/00	11/07/00	:01		4	5	80%
5 Conjunctions		11/07/00	11/07/00	:02		7	7	100%
6 Verbs		11/02/00	11/02/00	:02		5	6	83%
6 Verbs		11/02/00	11/02/00	:03		4	7	57%
6 Verbs		11/07/00	11/07/00	:01		6	7	86%
7 Double Negatives		11/02/00	11/02/00	:04		4	7	57%
7 Double Negatives		11/02/00	11/02/00	:01		9	9	100%
7 Double Negatives		11/02/00	11/02/00	:10		5	9	56%
8 Pronouns		11/02/00	11/02/00	:02		4	6	67%
8 Pronouns		11/02/00	11/02/00	:01		6	6	100%
8 Pronouns		11/02/00	11/02/00	:02		4	6	67%
9 Adjectives & Adverbs		11/02/00	11/02/00	:02		7	9	78%
9 Adjectives & Adverbs		11/02/00	11/02/00	:01		7	7	100%

† S = Strongly Advised
A = Advised
O = Optional

1

Essay Rating: VG = Very Good
OK = Okay
NW = Needs Work

Appendix M

Elsie's Essays

Appendix M.1: Elsie's First In-Class Essay

Student One Essay

Sample B

My name is Elsie and I am a TRA student. I live in X County outside of X Virginian. I am very nervous about being in school since I haven't been for thirty-five years. I have three children and two beautiful grandchildren. I have been a factory worker for at least twenty-nine years. My goal is to find a job in Human Services that will be rewarding to me. My favorite things to do is fish and enjoy my family. I don't know what the future is going to be like what roads lay ahead, and what prombles are ahead.

The only thing at this point in my life is that I am willing to try something new. When I sat down in front of this computer it made me think about all the things I don't know and how the world has changed, and left alot of us behind.

Appendix M.2: Elsie's Ending In-Class Essay

Student One Essay

Sample A

Waiting in Life to Marry

As years pass women's view's of marriage change along with them. Women in earlier years thought a girl should be married at an early age, and ready to start raising children. However women of today want everything better than their Mothers and Grandmothers had. Inculed in this way of thinking, is a better education, and travel.

In modern times, a girl graduates High School, then begins to think about going to College, not getting married and raising children.

Education has become more important to women than in years past. A woman has the opportunity to better herself in the world of today. More business opportunities have became available for women. Women are finically able to take care of themselves and make dessions for their own lives. Being able to travel and see the world before settling down to marriage.

Travel is something that most women would like to do on their jobs, being able to pack a suitcase and leave for another country, without having to worry about leaving a family behind.

Sometimes waiting to marry and starting a family is better. It gives you the opportunity to find out what you want to do in life. Instead of graduating from High School and getting married and starting a family right away. Times have changed and so have women and marriage.

Appendix M.3: Elsie's Narrative Essay

The Greatest Hardships of Homework

Returning to school after so many years is a scary feeling. It seems like work is never done around the house because I have homework to be done and to study. Our home seems to be getting out of control because I'm finding less time in my busy schedule to get my homework done. I'm lucky to get the house clean or laundry done for my family. Sometimes supper is a little late but we eat what I can get fixed. The greatest hardships of homework are finding that extra time for family and the things I need to get done.

Now is the time of the year for canning and picking the vegetables from the garden. Our garden is located in our back yard behind our house it's medium size with plenty of good stuff to eat. This year we planted rolls of beans, corn, and tomatoes all of them round and plump. The beans are green and full ready to be picked and put into the freezer. The tomatoes are hanging off the vines big red, and yellow ones waiting to be canned. The corn silks are black and ready to be picked. Tending to the garden is hard since I have homework to do.

The grandchildren especially have to have my attention whether I have an assignment or not. My youngest grandchild is eight-month old that cries for me to get him to-sleep. It is hard to drop what I'm doing for school and tend to the children. Especially because Hunter is a baby he needs more attention out of the two grandchildren. My other grandson Billy lives with me and he is in the fourth grade at [name omitted] Elementary School. Billy has stayed with me since he was five days old. I have to make sure he is getting his homework and getting ready for school the next day. This takes up a lot of my time and takes me away from my studies. My daughter also lives with me and attends college with me. She has the eight-month old son

Hunter. She was divorced after thirteen years of marriage. She had nowhere else to go so she came to live with me her mother.

Since my daughter and I went back to college we have made a study room out of a bedroom. The bedroom used to have a bed, T.V., and a dresser. Now it has a computer desk and a computer by Gateway in it. This equipment has a printer with it, which comes in handy for doing homework. This room provides us with a quiet place to go and study. This helps take some of the hardships of homework away.

Appendix M.4: Elsie's Descriptive Essay

My Aunt Bertha's House

As I first approach my Aunt Bertha's house I see a beautiful green yard. Orange, and yellow mums are growing out of old truck tires turned inside out. Stepping onto the porch I get a feeling of how people lived long ago. Aunt Bertha is sitting in the old rocker on the porch dipping her snuff. She is wearing an old bonnet and a dress she has had for years. She is always ready to talk and point out the beautiful flowers growing in her yard. There is no radio or television playing in the background only the birds singing from the trees. Everything is so quiet and peaceful, I feel like I have stepped back in time.

Entering into the living room I see pictures, and furniture that have been there for years. An old couch covered with a bed sheet sits under the window. A large picture of her house hangs over the couch. This picture was taken from an airplane it shows the beauty of her home, and her flowers. In the other corner of her living room sits an old cabinet filled with porcelain given to her at birthdays and Christmas. A large white-Shepard dog sits under the cabinet with just a hint of dust on it. Sitting against the wall is an old rocker that Aunt Bertha sits in to do her sewing. A large sewing basket sits in the floor with pieces of cloth lying around it. At the entrance to her kitchen is an old table with the bible lying on top of it.

Going into the kitchen brings back memories of years ago. The long table still sits there with those six hardback chairs sitting around it. In the center of her table is a bowl of plastic apples, oranges, grapes and bananas; they have been there for many years. An old cabinet stands near the table filled with Sunday's dishes in it. The cabinet has been painted white with a small pattern of green leaves for trim. Under the kitchen window a double sink is sitting in an old cabinet someone made for her. It is painted white with chips of wood gone from the side. The cooking stove sits at one side of the room with a small fire in it. A large pot is always sitting on

it usually filled with pinto beans cooking away. A large skillet is sitting on the burner filled with mustard greens that she has canned and a pan of cornbread that is ready to eat. She is now ready for visitors to come by and talk about her yard and listen to her stories of the bible.

When I think about stepping back in time, I go to my Aunt Bertha's house, the place where my father took me as a child. She always had dinner cooked for us, and a big smile on her face welcoming her company. Aunt Bertha always had plenty of time to talk and listen. We would always go on the front porch and sit in the old rocking chairs looking at her beautiful flowers and spending the day, a place where minutes turned into hours of enjoyment.

Appendix M.5: Elsie's Example Essay

My Husband George

I have been married to George for thirty-three years and know his habits well. His attitude towards things stays the same, day end, day out. George is known around our neighbors as a kind man who would do anything for you. However, I know the truth of his bad temper and lazy ways.

George has a bad temper over everything that he comes in contact with. Especially when it comes to his home life and everything that surrounds it. If his supper is not cooked, and waiting for him when he arrives home from work, he bulls up and sits for hours without speaking. His coffee has to be handed to him or he will not drink it. His bad temper shows when the telephone rings and you do not run to answer it, he will stomp the floor and ask "what have you been doing, I guess that was an important call for me about timber, where were you at". When family members come by, he will stomp off into the bedroom and start fussing about everything they had to say. After this settles down he will return to his couch, where he has been sitting since he got home from work. This is the side of him that the neighbors do not see.

George is so lazy that if he drops something on the floor, it will lay there until someone else picks it up. He carries his plate of supper from the kitchen to the living room to watch television, and the plate is left on the coffee table until I go to get it. Surrounding the coffee table in the living room, are newspapers, dirty socks, and his muddy work boots. When the mud from his boots dries and falls off at night, he gives it a look and leaves it there in the floor. When the garbage needs to be carried out of the house, he will walk around it or move it, so he can get out of the door. The couch is where George would stay day and night if it was not for him having to go to work. However, the neighbors do not see him as lazy, all they see is the man on the tractor who pushes the snow from their driveways in the winter.

I guess to other people George may seem like a good man. But, living in the same household with this man is a whole different story. The bad temper and lazy ways reflects on his household, even if he does not think they do.

Appendix M.6: Elsie's Final Exam Essay

Different Styles of Girls and Boys

As far back as elementary school girls and boys find differences in communication. Girls like to talk and associated with other girls in certain groups. However boys don't seem to limited themselves to a certain group. Girls enjoy standing around, talking about clothes, and what they have bought to wear. While boys are happy in tee shirts and blue jeans.

Boys enjoy talking to each other about sports and racecars. While girls find these subjects very boring. Who won a game, or how fast someone can drive, is what some boys like to talk about. However girls like to talk about how pretty the car is. Girls like to get together and talk about what they have bought and what is going on around them. While boys stand around and seem to wonder off in thought.

Girls seem to listen more than boys do. Boys seem like they are out in space sometimes and not hearing a word. While girls will listen to everything and try to soak in every detail. However boys forget and don't pay so much attention to what is being said. Some girls will usually go and repeat everything they heard. While boys will forget about it.

Girls and boys differ in communication alot. However they both have their own ways of listening, and understanding of things around them.

Appendix N

Lauren's Essays

Appendix N.1: Lauren's Beginning In-Class Essay

Student Three Essay

Sample B

I live in the country, in X County, VA on a farm. My home on the farm is located on top of a hill and our farm is all around the house. We moved to the farm about ten years ago. We raise beef cattle for a living. Our home is a small county type house with grey siding and a black fence around it.

The land is mostly clear and has grass on it for the cattle to eat. We have several other animals including a dog, donkey & cats for pets.

When we moved to the farm, the only building that was already on the farm was an old barn. This barn has always been my favorite place on the farm because it is so old. It sets on top of a hill and at all times of the day the wind blows there making all kinds of sownds. You can find peace and quite there. It is a place to go to so that you can think and relax.

I had never lived on a farm before, but now I would not want to live any where else.

Appendix N.2: Lauren's Ending In-Class Essay

Student Three Essay

Sample A

Marriage

Getting married today at a young age is not a norm thing to do. The trend in society is to wait until we are in our twenty's or thirty's before we get married. The fast moving society has had a great effect on this situation. Getting married at an older age has some good qualities; but it can also have some bad ones to.

Being older and wiser can make a better marriage, most of the time we have experienced many different relationships that range from good ones to bad ones. At a certain age most people mature and can handle problems in the marriage calmer and with a certain degree of common sense. A single person has a better chance of going to college, and getting their education before marriage. This can take care of money problems that most young couples seem to have. They also have had a better chance to travel, and may be ready to settle down, this could make a better relationship between husband and wife.

Starting and raising a family later in life can be a downfall to a later in life marriage. Plans can be made about when a couple would like to start a family, but this plan does not always work. Children do not always arrive at the time they have been planned for. An older person may not be able to handle a two year olds temper, or getting through the "terrible twos". The child grows up with an older set of parents, who are not likely to participate in school sports, or take as much interest in their activities. This is apparent when younger parents are the coaches of ball teams, and the older parent is sitting in the stands.

In today's society, the views of young and older marriages vary with each individual. It comes from our own life experiences. My view comes from my mother, who was born when her

mother was forty-eight years old. Her father died when she was eight months old, she never had a relationship with a father, and experienced many hardships. Money was always a problem, and her mother did not seem to have very much time for her. All my mother can remember about her mother was that she was always an old person.

Appendix N.3: Lauren's Narrative Essay

Torture

I felt like I was in a straight jacket; I could not move my legs or arms or even stand up. I felt like I could not breathe; my throat hurt from being so dry that I might pass out at any time. As a child, going to Sunday Church Services was like torture. I did not like getting ready, riding to church in the car or setting through long services.

Getting ready meant giving up my soft blue jeans, ponytail holders, and dirty tennis shoes for a stiff, starched dress. I remember one hot summer day riding to church in the back seat of my father's car along with my three brothers. We sat and made faces at each other as we pushed and fought each other very quietly so that my father would not hear us. By the time we got there, I was hot, mad and sticky from the starched dress that I was wearing. My father would always make me sit in church beside him with my brothers all on the other side of him, to keep me quiet. The pews were always hard and made my legs stick to them. It was impossible for me to move them around because the flesh would stick to the wood and it was not easy to peel them off. As the piano played and the songs sung, I was sure that I would die if I did not get a drink of water.

The sermons seemed to be hours long, the longer I sat the more impatient I became. At times, I would start to watch the people setting around me. Some of the mothers would be frowning at their kids for squirming around in their seats. I would see several people sitting with their eye closed and their heads bobbing up and down. They reminded me of those dogs people have in the back windshield of their cars; as they drive along, the heads of these dogs bob up and down. When the preacher would start his sermon he got louder and louder as he went along. Sometimes I would wonder if he actually thought he could run the devil right out of the church?

I started to look around and wonder which person it could be? I decided it was a man with a loud voice and had pointed ears. When service was over, I ran to the car to get away from him.

I usually begged my father to let me sit in the front seat going home, I could play my game of counting the houses on my street. When we pulled into the driveway, I knew my torture for that week was over. I could take that terrible dress off, put on my old clothes and tennis shoes, the remaining of the lazy Sunday afternoon was mine.

Appendix N.4: Lauren's Descriptive Essay

Lost Memories

Each morning as I drive to school; I am drawn to turn and look at something that most people would think was ugly. Even though it's an old and deserted house, it still has beauty.

At one time the yard had been alive and cared for. The large, tall, and dark house is surrounded by a dirty, white picket fence. The fence is now broken and crippled with sharp spikes of uneven wooden rails. There is a honeysuckle vine growing in and out of the fence. The orange and yellow blossoms have a sweet and warm smell of summer. A grapevine that is many years old, winds around a broken trellis like a mass of cold spaghetti noddles. The yard has apple trees that are old and twisted from age, they have small bunches of yellow spotted apples hanging on the branches. A rose bush is running up the side of the chimney, it has been rambling wild for many years.

The house is large, slinder, and dark. It has four large windows; two upstairs, and two downstairs. The front door is hugh, with hints of red paint in the weather worn cracks in the wood. The house does not have a front porch. It has a large, flat, green, moldy rock for a front door step. The foundation of the house is also the same type of flat rock. These rocks are layed one on top of each other with the same green mold between them. The windowpanes have been shattered into narrow strips of glass that hang like icecicles. As the sun shines; and the wind blows; the pieces of glass glisten with the colors of the rainbow. The wooden siding of the house is bowed from the weather; it has crustations of black mold that rubs off onto my hand like black shoe polish.

As I look at the house, I can see something different than the old remains of a home. I can see a bright, white picket fence; white curtains blowing in the wind, from an open window; a bright red front door; children running, playing, pulling apples from they young apple trees; a

mother tending to her newly planted rose bush. These are just my memories, the old house has it's memories hid within it old walls.

Appendix N.5: Lauren's Example Essay

To Know Elizabeth

Elizabeth usually wore a large crinkled straw had, that had a strip of sun-faded ribbon around the brim. She was short, plump, and most of the time carring her garden hoe in hand. Sometimes, I think fate does come our way, for meeting Elizabeth gave me something in life that I had never known before.

As Elizabeth and I became friends, we realized that age didn't make a difference between us. We went though happy times, and sad times. She told me stories of how she met and married her husband. I heard stories of her young life as a mother, and how she made mistakes while raising her children. She shared her stories of losing her parents at a young age. I was taught to to laugh at myself, and cry for others.

We spent many hours weeding her flowers in her garden. Her yard was beautiful with more flowers than it had green grass. The colorful patches of flowers remineded me of a box of crayolas melted together by the hot sultry sun, with swirls of colors mixing together like alphabet soup. Each plant was nutured with her love and care, as if she was raising children. Spending time with Elizabeth and her plants, gave me the art of patience, and the knowledge of how unimportant things in life can be great.

Sometimes we would spend the afternoon in her kitchen. We would bake her famous pound cake. The aroma reminded me of Christmas. The smell of vanilla and walnut was warm and inviting. These smells made her clean sparkling kitchen seem like she could have been Mrs. Santa Claus. Her kitchen was decorated in the 1950's era. It had many sets of salt and pepper shakers, a red checked table cloth on the table, and crisp ruffled curtains at the windows. I liked to watch her jump around the kitchen, she seemed like a playful kitten not knowing what to get into next. These times with Elizabeth gave me a feeling of friendship.

Elizabeth died about two years after we became friends. Loosing her left me with many good memories and a lot of knowledge. If in my lifetime I can give this felling to someone else, it would make Elizabeth smile. I didn't realize that after becoming an adult, that I could find the grandmother that I had never known before.

Appendix N.6: Lauren's Final Exam Essay

Wearing Two Hats

Being friends with two women who have different backgrounds can make good friendships. I can find common ground with both of them and we have a lot of fun together. I have learned to wear different hats when we are together. Even though, neither friend has met the other, I don't thing that they would ever be friends. I find in each one of them something that I like and can relate to.

Brenda is a small frame person who spends a lot of her time trying to keep her weight off. Tammy is a very tall woman who can eat what she likes and never thinks about her weight. Brenda has never had a public job and has never experienced money problems. Tammy is a single mother who has worked in sewing factories most of her life. Brenda is loud and laughs all the time trying to be the center of attention. Tammy is quite and is hard to get to know, she seems not to trust many people.

Brenda and I go shopping at the malls and the more expensive stores. We go out to eat at restaurants that have better names and cost more. Still we can laugh and talk about most anything that comes up. She is interested in crafts and we usually attend several upscale craft shows each year. My friendship with her is more guarded and dictated, but enjoyable.

Tammy and I go shopping at all the discount stores, we hit all the sales and we are usually standing in line the day after Thanksgiving waiting for the Walmart specials. We eat at less expensive places to have more money to shop with. We get together before Christmas and make cookies, candy, and cakes. We spend that day laughing and talking, and having fun. Our friendship is a lot more relaxed and we can talk about anything.

Both of these friends have brought with them many things to my life that I need. I know that I could call on either one of them for whatever I need. I hope that I am as good of a friend to

them as they have been to me. I cherish both of these friendships, and hope that I never loose them.

Appendix O

Angie's Essays

Appendix O.1: Angie's First In-Class Essay

Student Four Essay
Sample A

I walked into my english class today, and I am given the chance first thing to write about the best thing that ever happened to me, child X.

In Sept. of 1994, I found out that I was unexpecantly expecting a baby. I was not married and very much alone. After going to the doctor visit for the first time, and hearing the baby's heartbeat, I knew then, my life would never be the same.

I came out of that office with every emotion in the world going through my mind. But I knew some how, that heart beat and I would make it.

I was very sick the whole time I was pregnant with toxcemia and trying to dehydrate every other week. I was in the hospital four different times, scared beyond beliefe of loosing my baby.

But finially, on April 10, 1995 at 4:38pm, my mircle came into this world weighing 8 lbs. 15 ½ oz, and she was 20 ¾ inches long.

That was five years ago. There have been some very rough times, but I don't regret having her. She is the best part of me, and there isn't a day that goes by, that I don't stop and thank God for my daughter.

At times it is strange how things change our lives. She is the reason I am here at school, trying to become a better parent and a better allaround person.

Appendix O.2: Angie's Ending In-Class Essay

Student Four Essay
Sample B

What is more important money or children

Today there are more mothers who work out side the home than 50 years ago and in some ways children have been affected. Adding more money to the household budget is one of the few good things that have come from a working mother. It is much easier to point out some children will feel more abandoned and that mom does not have enough time for them, even if the job their mother has outside their home puts expensive shoes on their feet, gives them new video games to play, or puts food on the table.

Some mothers want to work to give their children all the material things in this world that they can. It is important to them that their children wear a specific kind of shoe or a certain kind of jeans. It may by ok with some mothers that many children come home to an empty house after school to await mommy's arrival form work.

When the mother does arrive, tired from her own day at work she rusher to get supper fixed, clean the house, and do the laundry. After the meal she does the dishes then tried hurriedly to help the child with homework. Finally, it is time for a bath and bedtime. When the mother is lucky she gets a few precious moments to read her child a bedtime story before the child is fast asleep. Leaving the mother sitter there watching her child, feeling guilty, for not having enough one on one time with her child.

More women everyday are choosing or being forced to go into the work force. Some mothers may want to work so their children can have expensive labels on their clothes but in some cases mothers work so their children can have groceries in the house, the lights turned on, the heat running, gas in the car, and a roof over their heads. It may bring good feelings to bring

in their pay checks, but I am not so sure it will over come the feelings the mother has of not having enough time for the child or worrying about the child being home alone while she is at work.

Appendix O.3: Angie's Narrative Essay

Alzheimer's in my family

For some reason I think all mothers are mind readers. Maybe it's because they always know what to say when you're hurt or somebody hurts your feelings. They never forget your birthday or anybody else in the family. They have a way about reminding you of what you are forgetting, most of the time before we forget it. My mom seems to be a professional at reading my mind and knowing what I'm going to do before I can even do it. Maybe that's why watching her own mother die from Alzheimer's was one of the hardest things she ever had to do. It made her believe death was a kind thing in the end for her own mom.

Before my grandmother got sick she raised six children, then after her children were grown she remarried and operated a little country store in [name withheld] Va. called WW Turmans. It was small and had candy, soda, washing powders, bread, eggs, soap, a few cooking supplies, dog food, and hog feed. She never had a calculator; she did the books in her head. She even held the position of church secretary for over 20 years. However, in 1995 she was diagnosed with Alzheimer's. Because of this terrible disease, grandma had to go into a nursing home where she lived for two years until her death.

My mom went every day to that nursing home for the two years that grandma was there. Bad weather didn't even keep her away. Mom never stopped hoping or praying that it would slow down or not take her mother's mind completely. I guess the part that put my mom at ease, because there are no easy parts, was that my grandmother never became violent. She did try to leave the nursing home onetime before she lost the ability to speak; she told them she had to "go home, fix supper, and wash some school clothes for the kids." At that time her youngest kid was 47 years old. Luckily enough for us all, the counselor talked her into coming back to her room. They finally had to stop putting a napkin on grandma's tray, because she didn't know enough not

to eat it. Mom cried every time she left the nursing home. She said her own mother didn't know who she was and didn't know any of her very own children. I still remember my older sister, Deborah, telling mom the morning grandma died to "take comfort in the fact that grandma would know her now."

Mom told the three of her own girls a few years later when we took her back to visit the graveyard that "sometimes death is kinder than what we become in the very end." My sisters and I watch mom closely as the years add up on her, because we think our own mother is starting to show signs of this terrible mind erasing disease.

Appendix O.4: Angie's Descriptive Essay

The mess Lori and I call a bedroom

Entering my house each room has Lori and me all over it. The only room that I call "off limits to junk" is the living room. If we carry things there then we have to carry them out. The room that shows Lori and my true messiness behavior is the bedroom that we share.

First entering, to the left on the floor is a pile of children's books. I read to Lori every night before we fall asleep while lying in our double bed that is pushed against the wall. By the end of the week, we may have 9 to 12 books waiting to be put back on the 4-shelf bookcase, that appears full regardless how many are bedside. At the foot of our bed, below the window hides my cedar chest with a beautiful shine on it making it appear brand-new although it is 16 years old. We rarely see that shine because it stays covered with extra quilts, doll blankets, our housecoats, and outfits I laid out for us to wear the next day. Beside the bookshelf is a three-shelf black bookcase that houses VCR tapes. Lori has a lot of Walt Disney movies, Kidsongs videos, Barney videos, 12 different Christmas videos, and many more scattered around the room. On another wall stands an old brown desk missing 3 of the 5 handles off the 5-drawers used to hold the television-VCR; nearby is my light brown rocker. Singing along next is my pioneer stereo system with a white oil-heating stove close by, protruding 1/3 of the way in the middle of the room, like something with its tongue stuck out. As I come to the corner, my dusty treadmill sits in front of a window. The wall left of the treadmill has a door leading into another bedroom.

Entering our bedroom here, on the left rests a white metal toddler bed used only by the 4 stuffed Barneys, 15 different baby dolls, Little Bear, Polar Bear, Montgomery the Christmas bear, Tigger, and two stuffed Pooh Bears. On the other side is a 5-drawer, chest of drawers; on top is where all of our play make-up and 9 different colors of fingernail polish reside. Meanwhile, against the wall where I began is a tacky black Navy footlocker that holds toys.

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Finally, there are two plastic totes stacked with a Fisher Price barn on top. One houses plastic farm animals, the other is packed full of Barbie dolls, clothes, car, and other fashion accessories.

In contrast, my living room is free from the toy and clothes clutter that exist in the bedroom. Lori and I feel more at home and spend most of our time in our mess. We save the living room for company.

Appendix O.5: Angie's Example Essay

Thankful To Be In College

In May of 2000, Cross Creek Apparel decided to close down its [name with held] plant. That meant I was going to loose my job; the only way I had of supporting my daughter and my self. I was scared that I would not be able to find another job, and I doubted that I was smart enough to go to college. Then, thanks to Cross Creek Apparel for the great severance package they offered me; and to my exceptional family who encouraged me in all the right ways to try my hand at being a college student, here I am, in my first semester at Creekview Community College. I never expected at the age of 34 to go back to school, or to be so thankful to the ones who help me get here and are helping me to stay.

When Cross Creek Apparel first announced they were shutting our plant down, they also told us that the company that owned us, the Russell Corporation, had set up a great severance plan for its employees. In the plan, employees could leave work and go register for college classes or attend job interviews without counting it as time missed from work. It gave us one week's wages for every year we had been with the company. The plan allowed us to keep our health insurance for 90 days past the time the severance pay ended, at the same price we were paying while employed. They also set up meetings for the Virginia Employment Commission to come to our work and explain all about the Trade Act (we could attend school under this law), the way unemployment benefits are paid; the best part was when the lady from the Virginia Employment Commission told me how much my benefit and gas money check would be. I was so thankful to know there would be some money coming in even if it was not enough to make all the payments of keeping a house and raising my five year old. That is where my terrific family stepped in and in their own ways made sure I could stay in school.

My sister, Deborah, calls me three times a week to tell me she is proud of me and to ask me if I have been doing all of my homework. My brother Jimmy, a mechanic, keeps my car running smoothly, so I do not have to worry about paying repair bills. My parents watch my daughter for me in the evenings and on weekends if I need extra time to study. My sister, Sandra, supports me in more ways than I could ever thank her for, but mostly with her endless checkbook that steps in and pays for all the payments I cannot. The other thing is her constant reminder, that my education today will be supporting Lori and me in the future.

If I did not have my family supporting me with encouragement, money, and babysitting services I would not be able to stay in school. Had I not lost my job and received such a wonderful severance package from the company, I would have never considered going to college. I am excited, scared, amazed, and thankful to Cross Creek Apparel and especially to my faithful family, for letting my life take on the new adventure of being a college student.

Appendix O.6: Angie's Final Exam Essay

THE ONLY TWO PUBLIC JOBS I EVER WORKED

The only two public jobs that I ever worked at were Jefferson Mills in [name withheld] and Cross Creek Apparel in [name withheld]. The people who worked in these places were very different; to me it was almost like going to another planet. Both factories were part of the textile industry although, the jobs were totally different. I tied up 15 years of my life in the two jobs put together, seven years with Jefferson Mills and eight years with Cross Creek.

In March of 1985, I went to work at Jefferson Mills as TG10 operator; this meant that I ran a machine that put the twist in yarn. I was trained by a woman who used a curse word in every sentence she said, and every other sentence was about her sex life. The people at the Mill used four letter words like they were magic, and by saying them a prize would materialize out of thin air. After five years I was promoted or demoted to supervisor. It was the hardest job I never want to do again. We worked in temperatures over a hundred degrees all summer long and in the winter time if the temperature fell below 87 in the building they turned the heat on, to make sure the yarn was heated enough. We all stayed soaking wet year round. In June of 1992, I decided it was time for a change and I went to work at Cross Creek Apparel.

Cross Creek was so different from what I was used to at the Mill. I now sewed shirts for a living. The woman who trained me to set sleeves in the shirts was very religious and didn't allow anybody in her presence to curse. I was trained to inspect shirts after all the sewing operations had been completed, by a woman who offered to take me to church with her every time I had a problem and threatened to go back to my former place of employment. I qualified to do most of the operations in putting a shirt together from placket attach, shoulder seaming, topstitch shoulder, collar attach, topstitch placket, set sleeve, side seam, labels, vents, button-button hole, to inspection of the shirt. When we got to work in the mornings, if it was a little bit

cold the women would tell the plant manger to turn up the heat; by the afternoon, if it started to get hot the women would tell him to turn on the air conditioner. I went from being soaking wet to having shirt fuzz up my nose around my neck, in my hair, and all over my clothes, my family could always tell what colors I had been sewing that day. In August of 2000, Cross Creek Apparel decided it was time for another change in my life; the plant shut down and I had to make up my mind where to go next.

I was scared to death when I started both jobs; and I cried along with my co-workers when I left both jobs. I thought I had seen the worst and best in the textile business, and at times I miss them both. However, the changes in my jobs seem to get better, I can hardly wait to see what the next one will be.

Appendix P

Danene's Essays

Appendix P.1: Danene's Beginning In-Class Essay

Student Two Essay
Sample A

My Family

My family consists of three people. First there is me. My name is Danene. I'm 25 and was born on April 6th, 1975. I like swimming and playing with my little girl.

Second is my husband. His name is Husband X Y. He's 24 and was born on July 5th, 1974. Yes, I like being older. He likes hunting and fixing old cars. Yuk!

Last, there' my daughter. Her name is Daughter X Y. She is 5 years old and was born on August 14th, 1995. She goes by the name, Daughter. She loves playing with her kittens and just playing.

Daughter also started school last Thursday and loves it. I hope I feel the same.

We also have a cat, Prancer and her two kittens. There's also a fish, Frog. My little girl named it.

Appendix P.2: Danene's Ending In-Class Essay

Student Two Essay

Sample B

My Family

I could write a whole book on my family, but I'll try and keep it short. There are all kinds of families today. Some show no love and others show all the love in the world for one another. I'm writing on my family because it's been hard growing up and wondering what's going to happen next.

My mother was a very hard person to make happy. My sister and I had chores to be done by 7:00 every night. She would never be easy on us either. If we didn't have the chores done by the deadline time she would ground us. We were expected to eat all the food on the table at dinnertime, if we didn't we would suffer the aggravation of listening to our mother yell at us. After awhile we would cram the last few bites of our food into our mouths and leave the table to throw it away. Our mother wasn't as smart as she thought she was. We got away with quite a bit of stuff, but if we ever got caught we would get punished even more.

My father was always gone, either at work or with my uncle, Bobby. He'd come home late at night drunk. My mother would sometimes start yelling at him and we could hear our father in the bathroom throwing up. This made us really dislike our mother because she was so hateful to our dad. It seemed like mom wanted everything done right or not done at all. This led to our parents getting a divorce. After this happened, I believed the family grew up a lot.

My sister and I got married and had kids of our own. We swore to each other to never act like our mother. So far we've kept that promise to each other. I will not make my child do chores, but she sure loves helping me. When she gets older I'll ask her if she

wants an allowance to do chores for me. I try not to be so hard on my child when she doesn't eat all her supper, but I don't force her to eat it. I try and talk her into eating more just for me.

My mother has changed since she has become a grandmother and is all along. We hardly ever went and seen her, but now she is different. She calls a lot more and loves buying presents for her granddaughters. I just went Christmas shopping with my mother and I thought she was going to buy the store out. I think she finally saw how we felt growing up with her. She taught us a lot, like: don't push your children, and don't make them do something that's not good for them. I know it's hard to except the way she is now compared to the way she use to be.

Appendix P.3: Danene's Narrative Essay

My brother with Muscular Dystrophy

My brother, Michael has a rare form of disease called muscular dystrophy. It starts with your breathing then goes toward your lungs. It stated with him having a hard time breathing. He would get blue around the lips and complained about not being able to breath. Soon after that his spine started to curve which isn't normal. We got scared so we took him to a doctor. The doctor told us he needed to go to a specialist so we took him. She told us Michael had M.D. (muscular dystrophy) That's a disease that deteriorates the muscles. It's a very rare disease and they have never been able to find out exactly where it comes from or how one can get it.

What we were told, more or less, was that eventually all his muscles would deteriorate and he'd be put on a respirator. (That's a machine that breaths for one who can not breath on his own.) He lived a normal life for about four years before it finally struck him. When it did hit him it put him on a respirator. He could hardly walk which lead him to being put in a wheelchair. The muscles around the spine started to deteriorate leaving him unable to walk. It had also effected his lungs leaving him unable to breath on his own. This lead him bing put on a respirator or a bagger. (This is an object that looks like a ball and the patient has to pump it in order to breath.) He had to get a traic put in his throat so he was able to breath with a respirator or a bagger. The respirator is a very big machine so he had a bagger to use when he couldn't take the respirator with him.

After all this happened he gave up hope. He wouldn't even eat which led the doctors to putting a tube in his stomach. He soon got used to it all and the doctors quit feeding him though the tube. He was ten years old when this first happened to him. Today he's twenty-one years old and is pretty much bed ridden. He doesn't even get in his wheelchair anymore unless he as a doctors appointment. He can't use the bagger at all anymore cause he has such a hard time

breathing. He gets shots all the time so he won't get sick and wind up back in the hospital. He can only lay a certain way. His back hurts to lay any other way. His legs are boney where his muscles have deteriorated. Where he lays in bed all day it has given him bed sores.

The doctors say there's all kinds of different forms of Muscular Dystrophy, but they don't know which one Michael has. They have it pinned down to Rigid Spine Syndrome, but their not for sure if thats the one or not. The doctors say its one of those diseases that are so rare that no one hardly trys to find out anything on it. The way I see it some other kids life can be saved if they would. My brother maybe so far gone that nothing could be done but he isn't yet! They don't need to just give up on a life cause of the way he already is.

It really hurts to see him in such pain, I can still remember him just like yesterday as a kid. My brother, as I know him and will always remember him spunky, crazy, and very mean. It's sad he'll never be able to go on his first date, go to parties, are even drive a car. I hardly go see him cause I hate to see him in such shape. I call him some but that doesn't make up for the fact that my baby brother won't be around forever.

Appendix P.4: Danene's Descriptive Essay

Alexandra

When I look at Alexandra, I see my husband and me as kids. Just like most are doing jumping, running, and playing. Children are trying to have all the fun in the world, not even having a care about tomorrow. Even though I see Alexandra in me, I also see her father in her, too.

Alexandra and me have a lot of features that are the same. I have sky blue eyes and she also does too. Her eyes are a little bigger than mine, but they are still sky blue. A lot of people say that I have a "pug" nose. Alexandra has a "pug" nose, also. I'm a little on the short side and I'm not to chunky or to thin either. When I took Alexandra to the doctor's, they told me that she was going to be on the short side for her age. She's not to fat or to thin, just like me. Alexandra's grin is what really is the same as mine. She can grin and I can look in a mirror and see me. That grin, my grin, that I've never paid much attention to is big and beautiful.

Alexandra also has dirty, blondish hair just like her father. She's his little shadow, she'd follow him anywhere. So at the end of the day when it's time for bed and they get ready to take their shoes off; you'd better hope you have a clothes pin around cause once you get a smell of those big, sweaty, stinking, feet, you'll need one. I can see pictures of both of them together and notice the dimple. They can both grin and you'll see this dimple on the right cheek. The dimple is in the exact same place and looks the same way when they grin.

There's also Alexandra's curly hair. All I can figure out is that she got it from her Aunt Kim. There's other things that puzzle me, though. She has all kinds of energy; that her father and I seem to not have. It may be caused by old age some how, but I doubt it. She also has this attitude that I can't seem to place. People can pick on her and she'll plainly tell them what she thinks. She also has a very soft heart. I can fuss at her for something and she'll start crying. I

really hate this cause I can't see that dimple or her beautiful eyes cause of the tears. I'd rather see those eyes and that dimple any day.

Appendix P.5: Danene's Example Essay

Dream Home or Not

In January, of this year, my husband and I went to look for a new trailor. Our old trailor only had two bedrooms and one bathroom. It just wasn't enough room for our little girl's toys. Her toys are like wildflowers, taking over our house. We figured she needed her own room and a play or junk room. We finally saw a trailor that we fell in love with. It had three bedrooms and two baths, just what we needed. Clayton Homes delivered and set up the 2000 model trailor. We thought we were getting away from the problems in our old trailor, but our new home had problems, too.

First of all, our old trailor was having a few problems. We had to tear the old floors in the master bedroom and bathroom out. The walls were a cream color instead of the white they were suppose to have been, so we had to put up new wallpaper. Not even one of the screens in the windows were left from the previous owners. A couple of months before we decided to get a new trailor, the waterheater burst and ruined the master bedroom floor again. There seemed to be no end to the disasters that hit our old, ugly, worn-out, unlucky trailor. It was like a never ending tornado, disaster after disaster!! So once more we had to tear out the master bedroom floor and redo it again. That had done it!! We started out for our new trailor.

Not even a week we had found the trailor we wanted. Clayton Homes gave us $6000.00 for our old trailor. When they brought the new trailor and moved out the old one, all I could think was, "Good luck and good riddance!" It was finally over or so we thought. We had our share of problems with the new trailor, too.

First of all, the trailor setters cut though the phone lines and tore our yard up. They even left ruts in our yard ankle deep. A month after we moved in, none of the doors would shut, the closet and cabinet doors were slanted and wouldn't shut either. We were putting up the

underpending and noticed there was water leaking from the insulation. I finally called Clayton Homes and told them to come and fix these problems. They did some of the work, but had to come back another day to finish. They were very nice about the problems, so I never had to fuss or get angry.

We've been in or home for ten months now. Oh, we still have some problems, but our home is under warranty. So we have nothing to worry about. Christmas is coming up and I can't hardly wait. My home is going to shine with all the lights I'm going to put on it. I guess in a way I'm showing off my new home. I believe that means its my dream home after all.

Appendix P.6: Danene's Final Exam Essay

Pluma Verses Cross Creek

My two jobs are somewhat the same, but there's a lot of difference between them to. The jobs that I'm telling about are at Pluma and Cross Creek Apparel. They were both sewing and a production standard factory. Both plants were closed down due to the work going over seas.

I worked at Pluma for four years. I put my time and energy into that place. It was a very good place to work for. The production standard wasn't very high and could easily be made. The boss wasn't very hard on you, unless you got on his bad side. It was a thirty-five minute drive for me to get to Pluma. The factory wasn't very big, it may have held a little over one hundred people. No one seemed to get into your business and everyone was your friend. People rarely got mad at each other for having to work overtime. Usually the plant manager was nice to let employees out of work if they had something to take care of. The policy at Pluma was that anyone could miss up to seventy-two hours.

Cross Creek on the other hand was totally different. It was a lot bigger than Pluma and held about two to three hundred people. Some people were very hateful there to. This factory had a line production standard, everyone had to make production or the whole line had to work overtime. People did not like this and they would get mad at the ones who got behind. They really didn't like it when new people started and were in there lines, because this would always set them back and they'd have to work overtime. I guess that's what happens when you get to many people working together. The policy at Cross Creek was strict. If anyone missed over twenty-seven hours they would be fired. I felt this plant was not a very good plant to work at if you had kids.

Pluma will always be my favorite job. I liked working there and I had a lot of fun there to. It wasn't just a job, but a whole lot like family.

Appendix Q

Final Exam

Final Exam

English 03-F4

December 2000

Write a comparison/contrast essay on one of the following topics: Narrow down your thesis.

1. Two jobs you have held.
2. Two bosses you have worked for.
3. Two parenting styles you have observed.
4. Two friends you have had.
5. Compare the oral communications styles of men and women you have known.
6. Compare the oral communications styles of girls and boys.

Vita

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Education

Doctorate of Philosophy, Curriculum and Instruction, expected June 2001
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech), Blacksburg, VA
Dissertation: Trade Readjustment Act Women in Developmental Writing: Preparing for Education and Retraining
Advisor: Patricia P. Kelly
Course Highlights: Curriculum Planning, Training and Development, Product and Program Evaluation, Qualitative Research, Instructional Design, Instructional Design in Distance Learning, Adolescent Literature, Cognitive Processes

Master of Arts, English, June 1998, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA
Final Exam Project: The Use of Western Religion and African Philosophy in Zora Neale Hurston's *Jonah's Gourdvine* and *Their Eyes Were Watching God*
Advisor: Virginia C. Fowler
Course Highlights: Composition Theory, Children's Literature Theory, Shakespeare, 20th Century Black Authors, World Children's Literature

Collegiate Professional Licensure, English & Journalism, December 1989, Christopher Newport College, Newport News, VA
Course Highlights: Exceptional Learners, Test and Measurement Design

Bachelor of Arts, English, May 1986, Christopher Newport College, Newport News, VA
Course Highlights: Advanced Technical Writing, Journalism I & II, Prose Writing

Honors/Affiliations

Omicron Kappa Delta Leadership Honor Society
National Council of Teachers of English
Roanoke Chapter American Society of Training and Development
American Educational Research Association

Research Interests

- Adult learners' transition to workplace
- Diversity issues in education
- High stakes testing
- Distance learning
- Human/computer interaction

Teaching Interests

- Instructional design
- Methods in teaching
- 20th century Black authors
- Technology/computer usage in classroom
- Writing (prose, teaching, fiction, theory and/or technical)

Scholarships

Alpine Project Virginia Tech, April 2000
- Scholarship to teach and study at United Nations European Headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland

College of Human Resources and Education Virginia Tech, April 2000
- Scholarship to participate in UNESCO's 2nd Water Symposium in Cannes, France

ASTD Roanoke Chapter Scholarship, January 2000
- Scholarship to support dissertation research

TransAtlantic Summer Academy, Summer 1996, University of Bonn, Bonn, Germany
- Full scholarship provided to two teachers in Virginia by University of Virginia
- Studied European Union: Regions and Nations; also Bundestag and NATO

Technology in Gifted and Talented Classroom, Spring 1995, Radford University, Radford, VA
- Scholarship to learn techniques for implementing technology in the gifted classroom

Advanced Placement Institute, Summer 1995, St. Johnsbury Academy, St. Johnsbury, VT
- Studied at Institute on scholarship from Montgomery County Schools

Eastern Virginia Writing Project, College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, VA
- Participated as fellow in extension of National Writing Project

Related Experience

Teaching

University Supervisor/Mentor, Department of Teaching and Learning, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA, August 1998-May 2000

- Supervised/mentored pre-service English teachers while in field for student aiding and student teaching
- Managed public relations between public schools and University
- Assisted Methods professor in and out of classroom
- Evaluated pre-service teacher performance

Graduate Teacher, Department of English, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA, August 1997-May 1998

- Designed, chose materials, constructed syllabus, graded/evaluated and taught Freshman English Composition for first and second semester

Writing Center Tutor, Virginia Tech Writing Center, Blacksburg, VA, August 1996-December 1996

- Assisted students from all disciplines, with a focus on English as a second language students, with their writing

Academic Writing Tutor, Virginia Tech Athletic Department, Blacksburg, VA, September 1996-July 1997

- Assisted and tutored athletes with their writing for all classes on the university level

English/Journalism Teacher, Shawsville High School, Montgomery County Virginia, August 1995-June 1996

- Planned, taught and evaluated Advanced Placement English, 11th grade English, and Journalism (yearbook and newspaper)
- Sponsored newspaper, yearbook and junior class (prom)

English/Journalism Teacher, Gloucester High School, Gloucester County, Virginia, August 1990-June 1995

- Planned, taught and evaluated 9th, 10th and 11th grade English, including Honors, journalism (newspaper)
- Sponsored newspaper
- Taught adult night classes for Project STAR adult diploma program

Homebound Teacher, Montgomery County VA schools, Gloucester County VA schools, Hampton City VA schools, January 1990-Present

- Teach students unable to attend school due to illness
- Teach all subjects and communicate with classroom teachers

Student Teacher, American Federation of Schools, Guadalajara, Mexico, September 1989-December 1989

- Taught AP English and English to students from diverse cultures (Mexican, Japanese, and American)

Research

PhD. Research, Department of Teaching and Learning/Curriculum and Instruction, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA, August 1998-Present

- Examining (interviews, writing samples, fieldnotes) Trade Readjustment Act funded women in community college developmental writing course
- Fieldwork with developmental teacher (Pilot Study)

Research Assistant, Center for Teacher Education, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA, August 2000-Present

- Webmaster for NCATE and Center for Teacher Education websites

Research Project Participant, Qualitative Research Course, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA, Spring 1999

- With two other team members, conducted interviews with high school English and math teachers about VA Standards of Learning High Stakes Testing, and prepared study report
- Presented study report to key participants in Montgomery County Schools

Internships

Instructional Designer, Certified Medical Representatives Institute, Roanoke, VA, May 1999-August 1999

- Rewrote objectives for courses to more closely match those objectives used in business

Public Relations Assistant/Reporter, Langley Air force Base, Hampton, VA, January 1986-May 1986

- Helped organize tours and public relations meetings
- Reported for the Air force newspaper, *The Flyer*

Consulting Experience

Editor, Self-employed (on Virginia Tech Writing Center's list of editors), Blacksburg, VA, August 1996-Current

- Edit for grammar and mechanics for all schools of the University on an appointment basis

Trainer, United Nations European Headquarters, Geneva, Switzerland, May 2000-July 2000

- Conducted evaluation of existing online module
- Conducted needs assessment of foreign language teachers' need for implementing computer-based instruction at a distance
- Prepared report of findings for Director of Training

Trainer, Virginia Tech European Studies Center, Riva San Vitale, Switzerland, June 2000

- Conducted seminar, for communications students, on cultural issues in bringing communications to the Internet

Evaluator, Maryland/Virginia Regional Veterinary Medicine College, Blacksburg, VA, January 2000-May 2000

- Performed product evaluation on new Vet Medicine software
- Prepared assessment report

Designer, Online Instructional Technology Master's Program, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA, August 1999-December 1999

- Prepared detailed instructional design for semester long online module
- Designed instruction and manual for instructors for module

Conferences, Speeches and Publications

Hall, K.L.(2001, January). Presentation of dissertation research. Speech at monthly meeting of American Society of Training and Development, Roanoke Chapter, Roanoke, VA.

Hall, K.L. (2000, September). The UN comes to Virginia Tech: Opportunities for university graduates in global settings. Speech for Alpine Project Presentations of Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA.

Hall, K.L. (2000, May). Managing distance learning on the computer. Paper presented at the 2nd Symposium on Water, Cannes, France.

Hall, K.L., Soares, D., & Hicks, D. (2000, February). Diversity issues in the classroom: Secondary preservice English, mathematics, and social studies teachers. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Eastern Educational Research Association, Clearwater Beach, FL.

Soares, D., Hicks, D., Casey, D., & Hall, K.L. (2000, February). Collaboration, connections, and community: Addressing the standards through an interdisciplinary experience in secondary preservice teacher education. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Eastern Education Research Association, Clearwater Beach, FL.

Hall, K.L. (2000). The importance of teaching preservice teachers to interpret media and advertising. South Carolina Association of Colleges for Teacher Education 1999 Annual Fall Teacher Education Conference: Conference Proceedings, 41-50.

Hall, K.L. (1999). The importance of teaching preservice teachers to interpret media and advertising. Paper presented at the annual meeting of South Carolina Fall Teacher Education Conference, Charleston, SC.

Hall, K.L. (1999). Looking back: Fish tales…It's a wonderful life growing up around water. The Sportfishing Report 8 (4), 24.

Hall, K.L. (1999, June). Western religion and African philosophy in Zora Neale Hurston's *Jonah's Gourdvine* and *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Zora Neale Hurston Society, Salisbury, MD.

Hall, K.L. (1999). Looking back: Boat brat…Growing up in the boat business. The Sportfishing Report 8 (3), 24.

Hall, K.L. (1999). Looking back: An affair to remember…North Carolina's Outer Banks. The Sportfishing Report 8 (2), 22.

Licensure

Commonwealth of Virginia Collegiate Professional Teaching License—English and Journalism

Technical/Computer Skills

Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel, HTML, Page Maker, FrontPage, Netscape Composer, V-Tel Video Conferencing Equipment, e-mail, internet, transcription machine

Additional Foreign Study/Travel Abroad

- Studied at Moscow State University, Moscow, Russia, Summer 1997
- Speak, read, and write French
- Extensive time spent in Switzerland, France, Romania, and Russia
- Traveled to Mexico, Canada, Spain, Italy, England, Scotland, Wales, Hungary, Holland, Germany and Belgium

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